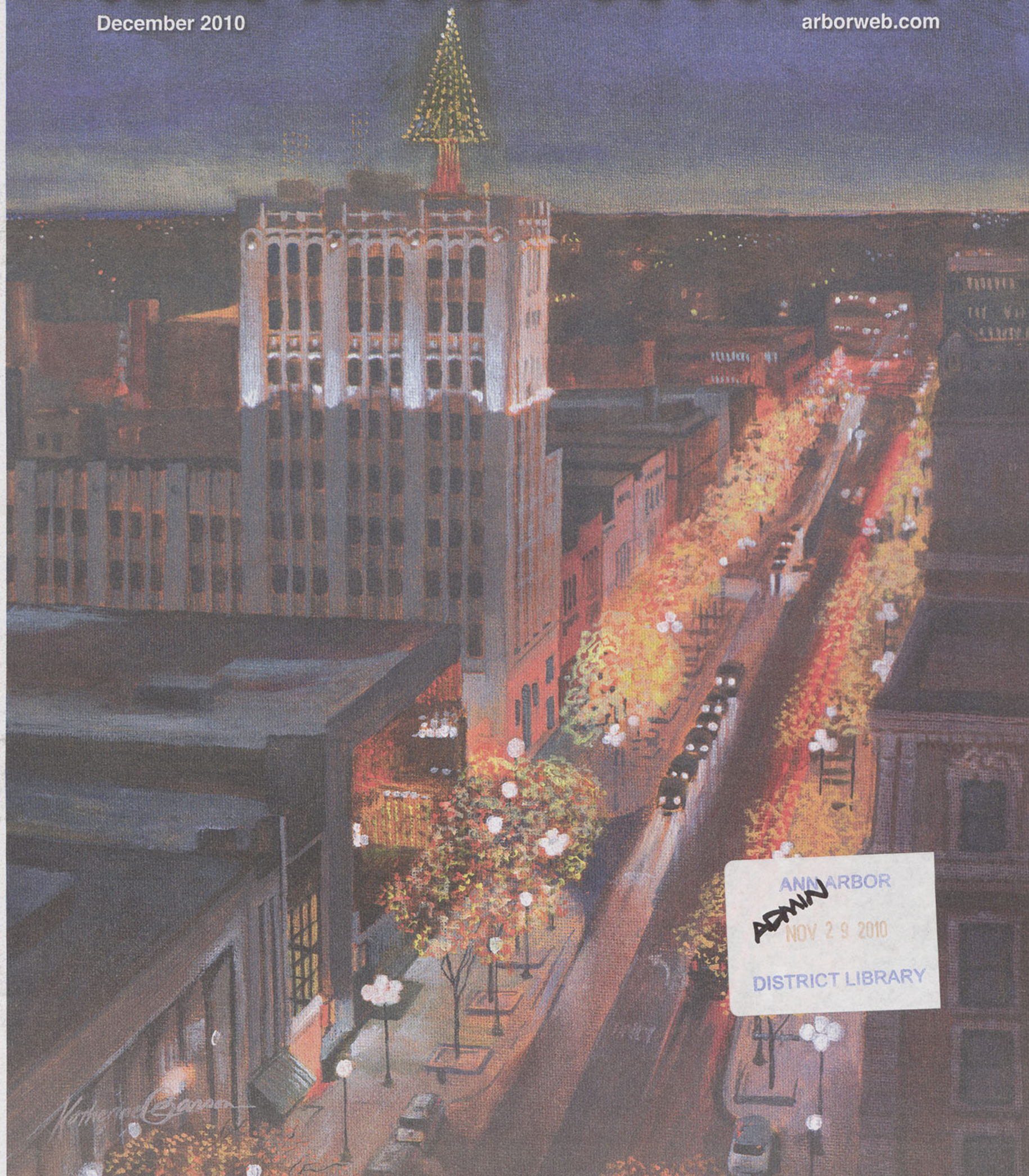


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December 2010

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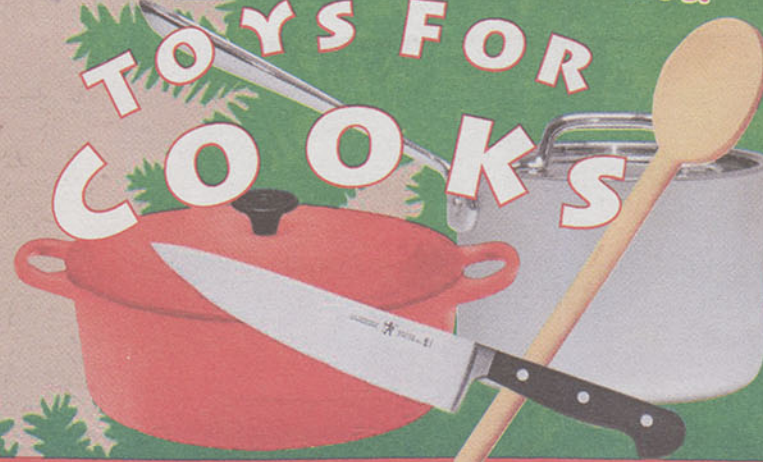
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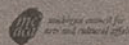


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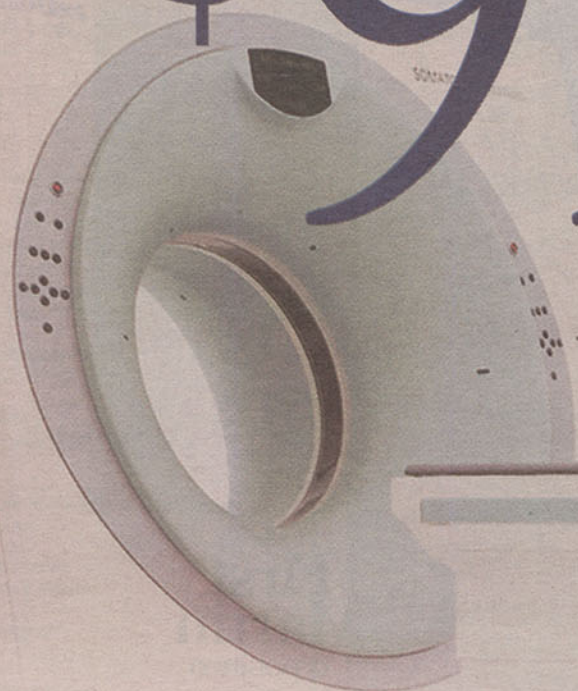
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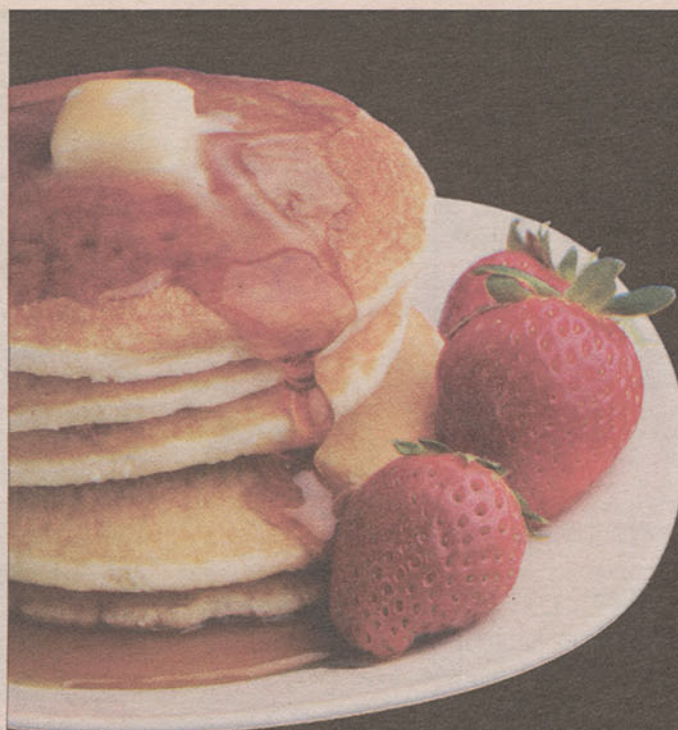
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"KERRYTOWN CARES"

Tuesday, December 14, 5:30 - 9:00 pm

Sponsored by the Junior League of Ann Arbor: Kerrytown opens its doors to an evening of charity! The 1st Annual Kerrytown Cares, a fabulous evening of holiday shopping, wine tasting, culinary experiences and socializing. Come shop 'til you drop and bring all your friends too! In partnership with the Junior League of Ann Arbor, participating merchants will donate a percentage of the proceeds to benefit Girls Group, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping high school girls achieve emotional and economic security through expanded educational and professional opportunities. 734-249-6717 arrangements@jlaa.org. Free.

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December Cooking Classes

Wednesday, Dec. 1st - 12 to 1

Brunch Favorites with Thais Anne Peterson Class Fee: \$15

Sunday, Dec. 5th - 3 to 4:30

Frita & Batidos with Eve Aronoff. Class Fee: \$25

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Sunday, Dec 12th, Sparrow Market will host their monthly dinner featuring a five course meal. Call 761-8175 for reservations.



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Dec 12th - 12 noon to 3pm

The Omega Star with Cindy Hollander

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Dec 4th- Holidays party dips- Pumpkin Spice & Spicy Cranberry

Dec 11th- A taste of soup to warm your soul!

Dec 18th- Our infused sugars, Raspberry, Cinnamon, Lemon and Vanilla bean will top Sugar cookies. Santa will be delighted.

MIDNIGHT MADNESS!

Friday, Dec 3rd, 6pm to midnight

Start the Madness in Kerrytown Market & Shops and the surrounding District stores along Fourth & Ann Streets for a fun-filled evening of shopping and dining. You'll find great holiday sales, with music and festive activities throughout. Join us for a wine tasting from 7pm until 9pm in Kerrytown hosted by Everyday Wines, and sponsored by the KDA.

SECOND ANNUAL KINDLEFEST

Friday, Dec 3rd, 6pm to 10pm

The Kerrytown District's Second Annual KindleFest will be held in the Farmer's Market featuring artisans and farmers selling their goods and wares for the holiday season. We'll have live music, fire pits to keep warm & roast s'mores, along with beer, mulled wines and food for purchase! FREE!



LANTERN PARADE

Friday, December 3rd

6:30pm until 7:30pm; lantern pick-up 6:30pm until 7pm; Parade 7pm until 7:30pm

New this year to the KindleFest - The Kerrytown District Association along with the Tübingen Sister City Group of Ann Arbor presents the Annual Children's Lantern Parade modeled after the German St. Martin tradition that celebrates Samaritan deeds. At the parade, children will illuminate the neighborhood with colorful lanterns while singing American Christmas carols. Bring your family to watch or participate. Cost: \$10 per Lantern; \$3.00 if you bring your own lantern.

THE LIST

- Kid Stuff:** Elephant Ears Organic, US & European Children's clothing & accessories; Mudpuddles Creative and unique toys for kids
- Women's Apparel:** Mathilde's Imports Elegant women's apparel from around the world; V2V Women's high-end fashion, bridal ware & home décor
- Kitchen & Home:** Hollander's Upstairs Extensive kitchenware store and home furnishings
- Services:** Encore Studio Salon with excellence in hair, skin and nails; Sparrow Athletic Personalized fitness training to fit your needs
- Gifts & Treasures:** FOUND Whimsical art and vintage treasures; Ann Arbor Spice Merchants Spices and dried herbs from around the world; Hollander's Book & Paper Arts Decorative papers & bookbinding supplies; Princess Designs Handcrafted jewelry, gifts and collectables; Fustini's Handcrafted Oils & Vinegars
- Eateries:** Durham's Tricklelements Nationally acclaimed smoked fish, meats & provisions; eve French-based contemporary cuisine, open for dinner; Everyday Wines Wines from around the world; Kosmo Eatery Tasty, good affordable American & Korean fare; Monahan's Seafood Market Nationally acclaimed fish and seafood market & lunch counter; Sparrow's Markets Fresh produce, groceries, homemade sausages, Amish-raised poultry & grass fed meats; Sweetwaters Coffee, tea and pastries; Yamato Fine Japanese cuisine and sushi

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Ann Arbor Observer

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Crimes of Opportunity: That's what AAPD chief Barnett Jones calls the recent rash of armed robberies at local businesses. Between the stickups at Schlanderer's jewelry store, a second-floor marijuana clinic downtown, the Bank of America on Eisenhower, and the Lake Trust Credit Union on Packard, "red alerts" from the AAPD and school lockdowns seemed to be coming almost weekly this fall.

The Schlanderer's robbery is still under investigation—Jones says it's part of a larger pattern of crimes—but he points out that "we were one of the agencies that did manage to catch them [the robbers]." As for the robbery at the Liberty clinic at 206 S. Main, he says, a "young man had been there a week prior." He and friends drove in from out of town "because they figured it would be easy to knock it over. And that's what they did." The police caught all three of them. Still at large is the lone gunman who robbed the credit union and the two who held up the bank.

Jones is on a mission to get Ann Arborites to secure their homes and businesses. "People say to me, 'I've lived in Ann Arbor for years and I never lock my door,'" he says. "Well, that's wrong." For one thing, he points out, "now we're not only dealing with local criminals but those from elsewhere. Because criminals don't go to places with other have-nots. They go to places where the haves live."

Holiday Cheer: Maher Jaboro of A&L Wine Castle says his sales "easily double" at year-end. "Christmas is bigger in liquor," he says. "Thanksgiving is bigger in wine."

"We typically expect the day before Thanksgiving to be the biggest day of the year for wine sales," agrees Matt Morgan of Morgan & York—though the Saturday before Christmas is coming on strong in the last couple of years. Christmas is still "definitely bigger for liquor," Morgan says. "It really takes off. For a lot of our customers, especially customers who are shopping for men, liquor seems to be a popular holiday gift, especially brown spirits—whiskey and scotch."

Parties and gift-giving, of course, are what make Christmas bigger than Thanksgiving, but the economic downturn has affected them, too. "It does show," says Jaboro. "Last year, we were down from the year previous. There were a lot of company parties we used to do. If they do parties now, they don't do alcohol."

Storm Water Art: Despite a national outcry over funding art while laying off firefighters, City Council voted 8-3

in November to proceed with a \$742,000 sculpture fountain in front of the new police-courts building. But two additional interior wall pieces, also designed by artist

Herbert Dreiseitl of Ueberlingen, Germany, have quietly been dropped—Margaret Parker, chair of the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission, says they fell victim to rising costs compounded by architectural, aesthetic, and materials changes. Dreiseitl originally suggested Corten steel for the fountain, but fabricating it

to his specifications would cost \$90,000 more than if the fountain were made of bronze, says project manager Kenneth Clein of Quinn Evans Architects. So bronze it will be.

Dreiseitl's niche is artistically repurposed runoff. Rainwater that falls on the site will be stored in a cistern under a plaza facing Huron Street. Some will irrigate a water garden, while the rest—treated to meet health code requirements—will cascade down Dreiseitl's sixteen-foot-high bronze monolith into a small reflecting pool. Potentially mitigating the uproar over employing a German artist, the contractors chosen to complete the work are all Michigan-based.

Clein says the police-courts building will open in January. As for dabbling your feet in the fountain—you'll have to wait until June.

Homeless Smokers:

Cigar bars aside, about the last place in Ann Arbor where you can still smoke indoors is the DeLonis Center—the homeless shelter has three ventilated rooms for nicotine-addicted residents. Administrator Mike Austin says DeLonis asked for an exemption because it would be too chaotic to send smokers outside: "When people are on the residential floors at night, we don't want them going up and down the elevator and disrupting other people."

Austin declines to speculate on how many shelter residents smoke, but two current residents agree that it's probably in line with national figures for the homeless—between 70 and 80 percent (the rate for the general population is just 20 percent). Both smokers themselves, they collect

bottles to pay \$3 for roll-your-own kits. Told that the county has recently launched a smoking-cessation program aimed at the homeless and mentally ill, neither man is interested. "I'm not ready," says Mike, who says he's fifty-two and a lifelong Ann Arborite. What would he need to consider quitting? "A normal life," he says.

Pimp my Cop Car: Ann Arborites may have seen the Washtenaw County sheriff's new customized ride—a 2009 Chevrolet HHR—parked at Wheeler Park or directing traffic at U-M football games. Featuring a black-and-white paint job, red and blue flashers in the grille, and an LCD TV and a powerful bass system in the back, the department calls the retro-styled station wagon its "community engagement vehicle" (CEV). "We are not making arrests with this vehicle," explains Derrick Jackson, the department's director of community engagement. "It's not something to be feared." Deputy Ray Yee drives the



CEV to elementary schools to talk about stranger danger and Internet safety, and shows educational videos at parks, festivals, and community events. When Jackson overheard teens talking about guns at a Ballin' in the Willow basketball game, they put on a video about gun safety.

The makeover was done by the Custom Cars and Concepts class at Washtenaw Community College. The department's only requirements were to make it resemble a police car and to post a disclaimer to forestall any taxpayer complaints: "This vehicle was paid for with drug forfeiture funds."

Fox at the Co-op: It's probably safe to say that People's Food Co-op regulars are generally not big fans of ultra-conservative Fox News. But the staff at the Detroit Fox affiliate has at least one devoted fan of the co-op. "I eat here every time I'm in Ann Arbor," explains the man chowing

down on a salad in a Fox van parked near the co-op. "It's good, healthy food and it's cheap." Describing himself as a "film editor and writer," the man appears more interested in his meal than in the newsworthy event that explains his presence in Ann Arbor. "Rick Snyder, at the U," he shrugs.



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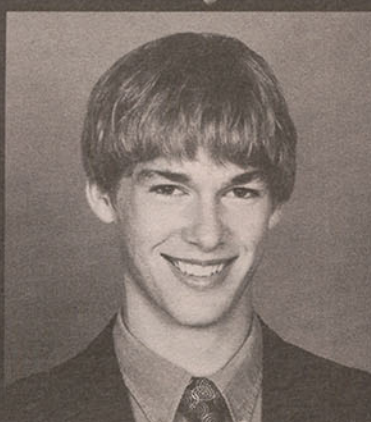
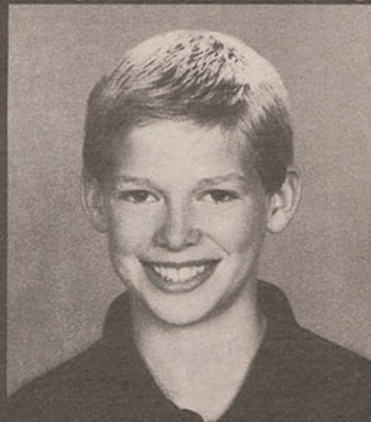


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Inside Ann Arbor

Cities vs. Townships

With police services contracts up for renewal, a fractious issue resurfaces.

It's official: a sheriff's deputy costs Washtenaw County \$176,108 per year. That includes \$74,000 in salary and \$45,000 in fringes, plus indirect costs like \$20,000 for central dispatch—but not the average \$10,000 in overtime a deputy earns each year.

The cost of a deputy has been the most fought-over number in county government. In 2006, three townships that contract with the sheriff for local police services sued the county over a price increase.

The county won the lawsuit, but only after spending \$1.2 million in legal fees. To avoid any recurrence, sheriff Jerry Clayton put in a year and a half documenting the \$176,000 figure. "We gener-

The cost of a deputy has been the most fought-over number in county government. In 2006, three townships sued the county over a price increase.

ated the numbers because we provide the service," says Clayton. "But we also worked closely with the county's finance office to make sure our assumptions aligned with the county's." And they also made sure the numbers were thoroughly vetted by the Police Services Steering Committee (PSSC), which includes township officials. "There are still a few areas of concern," admits Clayton. "But we have 90 percent agreement, and this is a democracy."

Now comes the hard part: arriving at a fair price. Because, as PSSC member and Superior Township supervisor Bill McFarlane says, "a fair price is more of a subjective than an objective judgment."

That's an understatement. The townships currently contract for a total of seventy-four deputies, at \$150,594 each. That's up just 4 percent from last year, but nearly double what a deputy cost in 2004. And with the county projecting deficits of \$12 and \$16 million in 2012 and 2013, it's likely that the sheriff's office will once again be facing cuts—potentially including the \$6.4 million in general fund dollars that cover the costs the townships don't.

"We have to make sure the cost is shared as fairly and equitably as possible," says county administrator Verna McDaniel, "but we're facing a deficit—again—and we have to be realistic about what we can do."

Two Ann Arbor commissioners want the price raised. "I hope police services



Sheriff Jerry Clayton with detective Doug McMullen and sergeant Dave Archer. Clayton says a patrol deputy costs the county \$176,000 a year—\$25,000 less than the townships pay.

get cut," says Leah Gunn. "It's not a mandated service, and we subsidize the contracted deputies plus the twelve general fund deputies and dispatch."

But though they say they'll fight for it, neither Gunn nor fellow Ann Arbor commissioner Barbara Bergman expects the price to go up much. "The majority of the board supports subsidizing police services," Bergman says.

Superior Township's Bill McFarlane argues that some subsidy is fair. "Consideration hasn't been given to the value a contract deputy brings to the county as a whole," says McFarlane. "My deputies go to Ann Arbor to help out, and deputies were there when the banks and the medical marijuana dispensary were robbed... it has to be acknowledged that the county on the whole is benefiting from contract deputies."



The city collected \$8.8 million in stimulus spending. Among the federally funded projects: a new storm water management pond at West Park.

Despite the differences between the cities and townships, administrator McDaniel says she doesn't see this round of negotiations being as contentious as the last round. "The townships have had a lot of input," she explains. "They've been at the table all along."

Most have—with one worrisome exception.

Ypsilanti Township, the biggest user of contract deputies and the leader of the failed lawsuit, has two representatives on the committee. But supervisor Brenda Stumbo hasn't been to a meeting since July, and clerk Karen Lovejoy Roe hasn't been since the July before that.

With a tax base devastated by the loss of five factories, Ypsi Township already has shrunk its police services contract from forty-four deputies to thirty-one. In November, voters passed a 1.5 mill tax that averted further cuts—but the township also owes the county \$2 million for fees it refused to pay while challenging the price increase. How they'll repay that Stumbo won't say.

Your Tax Dollars at Work

The ARRA dropped big bucks in Ann Arbor.

Whether you hate it as a boondoggle or hail it as a blessing, there's no question that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was good to Ann Arbor. Between February 2009 and May 2010, the financial stimulus gave local entities a total of \$430 million. That's \$3,900 for every man, woman, and child in town—and three times the national average of \$1,170.

The U-M, the town's biggest corporate citizen, got the most: \$261 million, with the hospital (\$78.6 million), the Institute for Social Research (\$48.3 million), and the College of Engineering (\$47.8 million) grabbing the biggest shares. But twenty-two other organizations in town also got Recovery Act money.

The Ann Arbor Board of Education snagged \$15.4 million. "We got \$3.2 million for special

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Inside Ann Arbor

education, \$1.2 million for Title One, and \$11 million for rate stabilization," says interim superintendent Robert Allen—the last being "money the federal government gave to the states to fill the gaps left by holes in state funding." In other words, ARRA merely plugged an already existing hole—a hole that will reappear when the money runs out at the end of the school year.

The city itself scooped up \$8.8 million to help pay for storm water, drinking water, and road improvement projects—most noticeable in West Park and on West Stadium. And that doesn't even include the windfall of federal money the city got in October: \$1 million to expand the Blake Transit Center, \$17 million to fix the Stadium bridge, and whatever part of the recently announced \$150 million in high-speed rail improvements stays in town.

Ann Arbor-based groups won \$430 million in federal stimulus funds. That's \$3,900 for every man, woman, and child in town—three times the national average of \$1,170.

The Great Lakes Science Center got \$8.2 million to plan and build two new research vessels. "They'll be in the 69–79-foot range," says director Russ Strach, "and we'll use them for deep water research on the Great Lakes, gathering information to set fishing regulations and stocking levels."

Altarum Institute picked up \$19.6 million to help transfer 4,000 primary care doctors' files to easily transferable computer files. And Merit Network got a whopping \$102.9 million to build 2,217 miles of advanced fiber-optic network in rural areas across Michigan.

The Center for Empowerment & Economic Development got "\$700,000 for micro-loans for small businesses," says executive director Michelle Richards. "\$300,000 in grants and \$400,000 in loans so far, though we're expecting more. We made five loans in Ann Arbor–Ypsilanti and a total of fifteen in Washtenaw County."

In Ann Arbor, microloans went to City's Pizza & Subs, opened in October by Pat Krolik and Paul Stone, and Frita Batidos, a Cuban-influenced restaurant on Washington run by Eve Aronoff that's expected to open this month.

Hollywood Workouts

"I was screaming like a kid at Christmas!" says Heather DuPuis.

DuPuis, co-owner of Vie Fitness and Spa, is naturally a calm, cool and collected kind of woman. But she went bonkers in October 2009, when she learned that actor Clive Owen would be training at her Ashley St. fitness studio. She briefly considered letting another of her personal trainers have the thrill of working with the English hunk, but decided, "Hell, no! I told them, 'I'm taking this one. He's mine.'"

In defense of her decision to pull rank, DuPuis points out that "I do [personal training for] a lot of males"—and that when Hilary Swank came to Vie in April, 2009, she assigned the star to fellow trainer Darlene Sosenko. While Owen worked out on "weights and heavy stuff," she says, Swank "didn't want to bulk up ... the women were paranoid about [developing] thick thighs."

The two were the first of a small constellation of stars to pass through Vie between spring 2009 and summer 2010, when Michigan's generous 42 percent tax credit lured several Hollywood movies to the area. They were followed by David Schwimmer, Neve Campbell, Rory Culkin, Hayden Panettiere, and Courtney Cox. DuPuis estimates that altogether, the actors and others associated with the films spent about \$12,000 at Vie. While it wasn't a huge windfall, she says, "it certainly was a nice little unexpected bonus to our revenue projections."

Of the group, DuPuis says, the only one with an attitude was Schwimmer, whose agent demanded that he be able to come in after hours. "He got a couple of massages," she says. "He wore sunglasses and a baseball cap and asked to come through the hidden side door."



MARK BIALEK

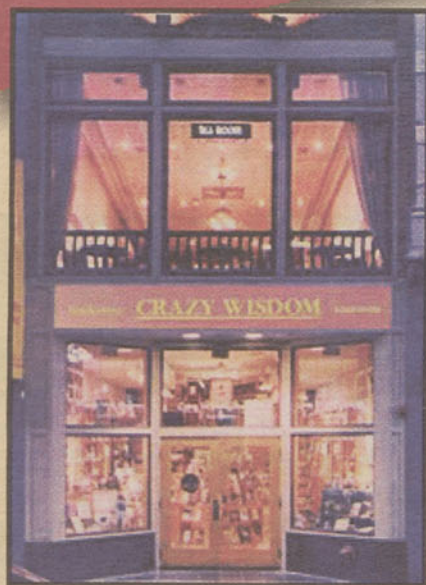
Vie owner Heather DuPuis says film actors and crews spent about \$12,000 at her downtown spa. She treasures Clive Owen's thank-you note.

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



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
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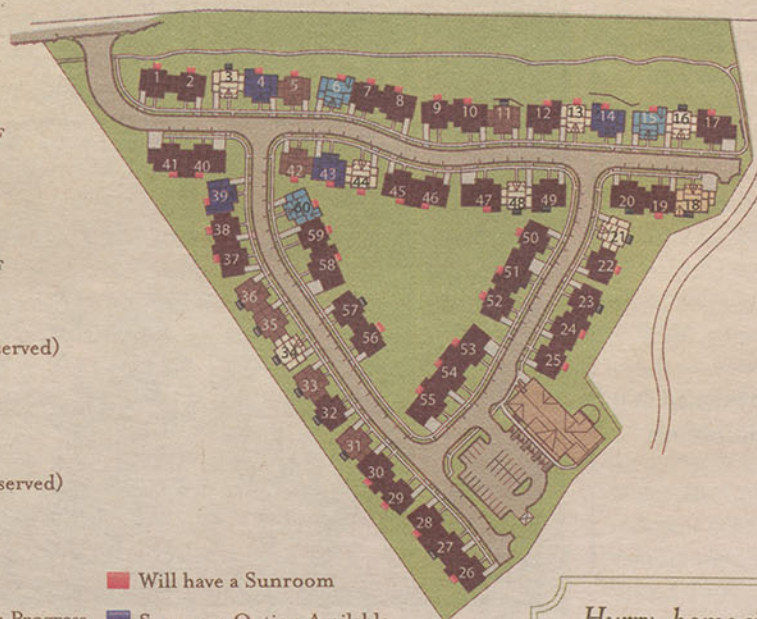
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Inside Ann Arbor

She was much more taken with Owen. "Clive Owen was truly the most humble, modest, down-to-earth client I ever had—not just the most humble, modest, down-to-earth actor," DuPuis says with a bit of a swoon in her voice. For his last workout, he had a big bouquet of flowers and a bottle of champagne delivered, with a handwritten thank-you card on his personal stationery. She has it framed on the wall at home, even though, she says with a smile, "It's not something Carsten wants to look at all the time."

DuPuis' husband, Carsten Hohnke, may not have been so sorry to see Owen go. A consultant who just won re-election to city council in Ward 5, Hohnke's no slouch in the fit-and-looks department himself—but he and Owen didn't exactly warm to each other. The only time the two hunks met, in Vie's men's locker room, Owen "didn't know Carsten was my husband," DuPuis says. "He barely gave him the time of day."

Writing Title in a Time of Crisis

Tom Richardson says Liberty Title's "big white-knuckle moment" came in the fall of 2008.

Richardson and his wife, Michele, had just purchased LandAmerica's Ann Arbor branch when lending froze that fall—putting a lid on the home sales that drive the firm's business. "We had a 45 percent drop in orders from September to November," Richardson says. And LandAmerica, the nation's third largest title insurer and the underwriter of many of Liberty's policies, went bankrupt.

People typically purchase title insurance when they buy a property or

refinance a mortgage. It insures against any liens, restrictions, or other "defects" that could lead to problems for the buyer down the line; agents earn their living by researching titles beforehand to minimize claims. But since the financial crash "it's harder to get loans approved and closed, or people aren't refinancing," says Scott Broshar, who co-owns Absolute Title with Christy Perros. And that, says Perros, leaves local firms like Absolute Title "competing for a piece of a smaller pie."

Between closings, consolidations, and bankruptcies, there may be only half as many title insurers active in the county as there were before the housing crash.

Since the crash, a number of title insurance agencies have been absorbed by other companies; underwriters that wrote policies through their own agencies have consolidated them; and some, like LandAmerica, have gone bankrupt. Perros and Michele Richardson, Tom's wife and partner, agree that the number of active operations in the county has dropped significantly; neither would be surprised if the number were half what it was before the crash.

Absolute Title survived by downsizing its staff and budget. It went from twenty-nine employees and a 12,000-square-foot building on South Maple to fourteen employees in a 7,500-square-foot building on West Liberty. Broshar credits the company's survival in part to strong relationships with the underwriters who pay out its claims. "If an underwriter starts to see too many claims coming in from an agent, they will drop them," he explains. "If they find out one of their agents isn't following their instructions, they will close them down."

"Detroit was one of the mortgage fraud capitals of the country, and a lot of claims have come in," Tom Richardson says. The Richardsons agree with Broshar and Perros that maintaining a strong relationship with underwriters is vital—Michele Richardson is proud that Liberty still writes insurance "for all of our major underwriters. We haven't been cut by any of them."

At Liberty Title, the staff took voluntary hour reductions, and the Richardsons went without pay dur-



Liberty Title owners Tom and Michele Richardson skipped paychecks after the financial crash—but also seized the chance to expand as other firms closed.

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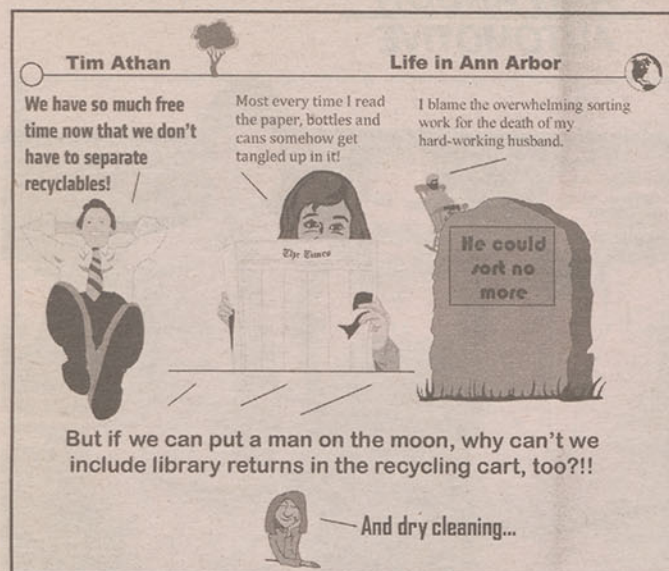
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ing the worst of the crisis. But as other firms shrank, they also moved to expand. They purchased Chicago Title's Jackson operation in 2007. Last year, they bought a former National City bank branch on Packard as a satellite office, and this year, they picked up four offices in metro Detroit and Flint through their purchase of Sky Title.

The AASO Bounces Back

A growing audience helps compensate for lost sponsors.

Times are tough in the classical music world. The musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra went on strike over management's proposed 33 percent pay cut before the current season started—and remain on strike two months later, with no end in sight.

That didn't happen at the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra. Subscription sales are up 12 percent this season, and single-ticket sales are up again for the first three concerts this year—after a 30 percent increase last season.

"We've never done it before," says Mary Steffek-Blaske, the symphony's executive director. "It helps that we've done 'Buy One, Get One Free' and other promotions. But the most impressive thing to me is that our retention rate for subscription sales is 87 percent. That means if they buy a ticket, they'll come back."

The bad news is that income from corporate sponsorships is down. "We have the same number of sponsors except the couple that opted out: Pfizer and Borders," says Steffek-Blaske, naming two of the orchestra's biggest supporters (others include Toyota and Campbell Industries). "A number of individuals and foundations stepped up, so the numbers weren't as bad as they might have been. In '08-'09, donors were 50 percent of our revenue, and it was down to 45 percent in '09-'10."

To compensate for the loss, everyone at the symphony took a pay cut. "Senior staff took 10 percent cuts starting in January 2009," says Steffek-Blaske, "and it's

we changed some programs to be mainly focused on the strings," explains Kim Eagle, president of the orchestra's board of directors.

As in Detroit, the AASO and its musicians' union couldn't agree on a new contract before the current season started. But "we have a gentleman's agreement," says Steffek-Blaske: "no strike, no lock-out." The musicians played the first three concerts under the terms of the old contract before principal violinist Kathleen Grimes announced a tentative agreement on November 16. It gives the musicians pretty much everything they wanted—more rehearsals plus pay increases of 1 percent, 1½ percent, and 2 percent over the three-year contract.

Though relieved, Grimes stresses that "the agreement still needed to be ratified." Steffek-Blaske confirms the tentative agreement—though like Grimes she warns the contract has to go before the board—"and they may or may not approve it."

Even if the musicians or the board shoots down the agreement, it's unlikely that what happened in Detroit could happen here. A 33 percent pay cut may be worth striking over—but not a 1 percent raise.

calls & letters

Secret sauce

"Everyone has their own opinion, and I'm not necessarily worried about the outcome," Quickie Burger owner Varujan Arman said in a phone call. "We won 'best burger' twice from the *Michigan Daily*." Arman's main beef with Hanna Raskin's November review of his State Street burger store was factual: "She writes about our 'mayonnaise-based special sauce.' First, it's our 'secret' sauce—we don't tell anyone what's in it, that's why it's secret. But the biggest thing is, it's *not* mayonnaise based—that's the one thing that we *don't* put in it."

come back some, but it's not back to what it was. Arie [Lipsky, the orchestra's music director] also took a voluntary 10 percent cut, and he continues at a reduced rate."

Though the musicians got a nominal 1 percent pay increase per last year, their real income also fell. "We reduced the number of practice sessions by [programming pieces] the musicians were more familiar with, and

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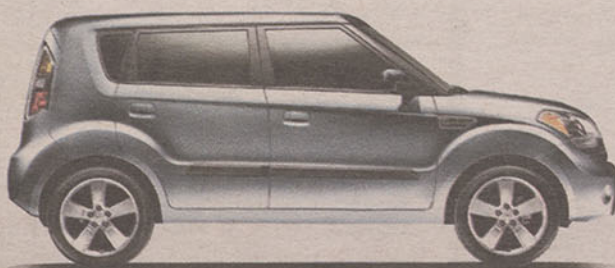


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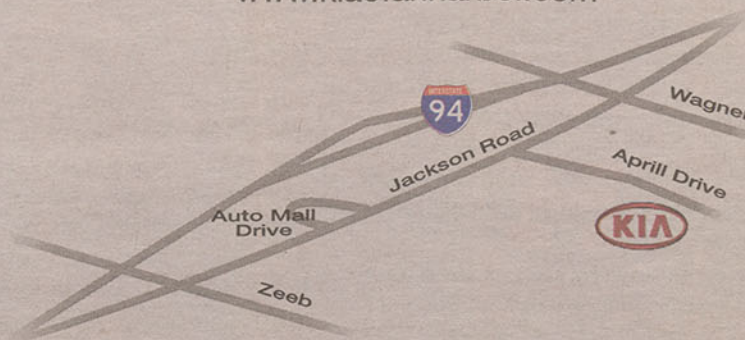
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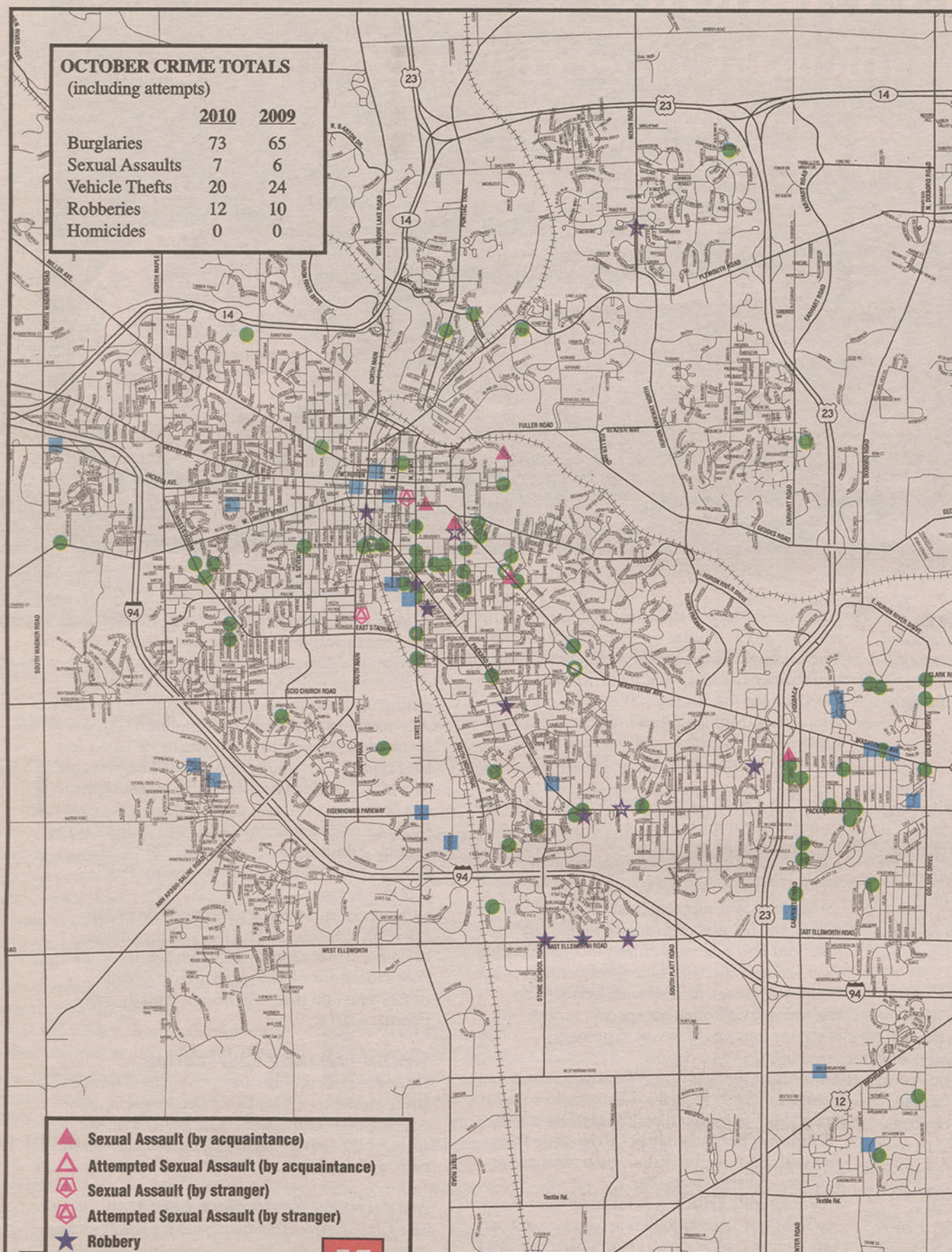
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CrimeMap

OCTOBER CRIME TOTALS (including attempts)

	2010	2009
Burglaries	73	65
Sexual Assaults	7	6
Vehicle Thefts	20	24
Robberies	12	10
Homicides	0	0



- ▲ Sexual Assault (by acquaintance)
 ▲ Attempted Sexual Assault (by acquaintance)
 ▲ Sexual Assault (by stranger)
 ▲ Attempted Sexual Assault (by stranger)
 ★ Robbery
 ★ Attempted Robbery
 ● Burglary
 ● Attempted Burglary
 ■ Vehicle Theft
 ■ Attempted Vehicle Theft

KEY

These are the major crimes and attempted crimes at Ann Arbor addresses reported by the Ann Arbor Police Department and the public safety departments of the U-M and Pittsfield Township in October 2010. Because locations are reported by block rather than by address, placement is approximate.

If you need police help in an emergency, call 911. If you have information about a crime, call your police department's **anonymous 24-hour tip line: 996-3199 in Ann Arbor, (800) 863-1355 on campus, or 944-1238 in Pittsfield.** If you have questions about a crime shown here, call Ann Arbor Neighborhood Watch (994-8775, Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.), the U-M Department of Public Safety (763-1131), or the Pittsfield Department of Public Safety (944-4911).

The box at the top of the map shows the number of crimes reported in October 2010 and October 2009.

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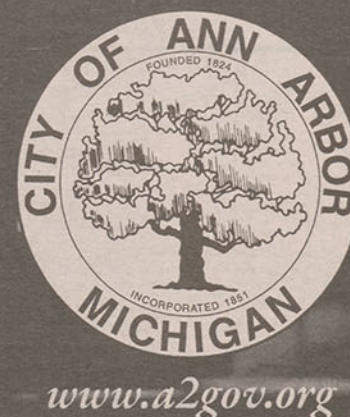
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CITY OF ANN ARBOR

Ann Arbor Municipal Center construction updates



On March 2, 2009, construction began on the Ann Arbor Municipal Center, which included a new facility for the 15th District Court and Ann Arbor Police Services as well as renovations to the current Larcom (City Hall) building.

15th District Court/Police Service Relocation

The end of December will mark the completion of a major milestone on this project as the City of Ann Arbor information technology and police services units as well as the 15th District Court Probation Department are expected to be relocated into the new building.

The probation department will be open for public business on Tuesday, Dec. 21, 2010, at 8 a.m. at the Ann Arbor Municipal Center.

By the end of January, the remainder of the 15th District Court (the judicial offices, the courtrooms, and the public service counter) will be open for business at the new address. Security screening for all Ann Arbor Municipal Center visitors will take place at the permanent public entrance lobby off of Huron Street.

Larcom Renovations

The contractor currently is underway with completing Phase 1b of the construction project, which includes renovations to the basement and floors one, two and six in the Larcom (City Hall) building. These renovations will enable service units currently located in leased space, including the City Center Building, to be relocated to the Ann Arbor Municipal Center campus. Some of these units include the Customer Service Center, human resources and public services administration. Phase 1b is expected to be completed in May 2011.

Ann Arbor Municipal Center Address

The new 15th District Court and Police facility along with the Larcom building will become the

Ann Arbor Municipal Center and will have a new address: 301 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. The mailing address for the police department and former Larcom building offices will remain the same for this location: Post Office Box 8647, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647. The mailing address for the 15th District Court will remain Post Office Box 8650, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

Service Unit Temporary Relocations

In order to complete final renovations to the Larcom building, several service units will be temporarily relocated. Onsite directional signage will be updated to assist visitors closer to the move dates and supplemental communication pieces will be used to promote temporary locations and minimize citizen inconvenience. And, unless otherwise noted, service unit office hours will remain as they were prior to the relocations. Call or check specific service unit Web pages to verify (www.a2gov.org).

- **Community Services Administration** – Relocating from sixth floor Larcom to seventh floor City Center building in early December.
- **Planning Services Unit** – Relocating from the sixth floor to the fifth floor at the Larcom building in early December.
- **City Clerk's Office** – Relocating from the second floor Larcom building to the first floor City Center building from Jan. 1-March 1, 2011.

Building Entrances

From December 2010 until April 2011, the parking lot on the north side of the current Larcom building will be closed. Additional parking is available in meter parking spaces on Fifth Avenue north of Ann Street. In addition, the temporary public entrance off Ann Street will shift to the south side of the Municipal Center off Huron Street. The new 15th District Court and Police Services building entrance will be off Huron Street, which, once complete, will be the permanent entrance.

Board & Commission Meeting Relocations

Due to renovations on the second floor at the Larcom building, all City Council, Board and Commission meetings will be relocated offsite during the months of January and February 2011. Any meetings televised on Community Television Network will continue to air live or be taped for later replay. These meetings also will be available for replay on video on demand at www.a2gov.org/ctn.

- City Council regular meetings will be held at the County Administration Building, 220 N. Main Street, County Board of Commission Public Meeting Room.
- Please consult the city's meeting and events calendar, the Tree Town Log, and the online calendar, www.a2gov.org/calendar, to check locations of any other public Board or Commission meetings during January and February 2011.

Grand Opening Celebration

Once construction has been completed on the entire Ann Arbor Municipal Center site, a grand opening celebration will be announced in late spring 2011. More details will be available on the city's website.

Stay Tuned for Project Updates

The City of Ann Arbor website, www.a2gov.org, offers a free service to notify subscribers when new information is available online, including updates on the Ann Arbor Municipal Center construction project (www.a2gov.org/court-police-facility). To subscribe, visit www.a2gov.org/subscribe, or click on the red envelope on the city's Web homepage. The city is also on Twitter (www.twitter.com/a2gov) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/thecityofannarbor), so there are a variety of ways to keep up to date with the latest project — and city — news.

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J. ADRIAN WYLIE

Pete Blanshard

Telephone man

The cell died!" Pete Blanshard exclaims. "I'm no good with them." Blanshard is explaining why a phone interview just ended abruptly—and making it clear that the vintage phones he restores weren't at fault. Although he has a cell, he finds them vexing and short-lived. A typical cell phone lasts only a few years before the battery weakens and it starts to fall apart. In contrast, he points out, the 1926 "candlestick" phone that hangs in his home still works perfectly.

After years as a sales rep for various phone companies, Blanshard, sixty-one, now repairs and restores "vintage" telephones—those manufactured between 1890 and 1950. He recently changed his little business's name from "Timeless Telephones" to "Crank Call Antique Telephones." He's a little worried people might not get the pun in "crank"—early phones used a hand-cranked generator to start a call—but the whimsical part of this serious-seeming man took hold.

"He's the only one I know of in southeastern Michigan" who can repair old phones, says Karl Lagler, owner of Antelope Antiques. "He probably does ten or twelve phones a year for me and my customers." Most of his buyers, says Lagler, "are young professionals. They like the look."

Unfortunately, there aren't that many young, retro-minded shoppers with landlines. And Blanshard's original clientele—people who remember early phones nostalgically from their own childhoods—has dwindled in recent years. "Prices started to go way down" about five years ago,

he says, prompting him to sell off about 100 "candlestick" phones—most of his inventory. He says that today the collection would be worth just half of what it was then.

Though most of his business now is in repair and restoration, he still does some sales. "Candlesticks," so called because of the long-stemmed microphone stalk that holds a separate earpiece, remain popular; Lagler sells them starting at about \$100. But Blanshard has seen them all, from the perky, pastel "Princess" phones that were a rage in the 1950s to a rare 1885 phone-in-a-desk that he's currently repairing. He expects that one to sell for at least \$3,000.

Blanshard has enough of a beard to give him that craftsman air, heightened when he reaches into his pocket to extract his 1884 gold pocket watch (a smaller part of his business is vintage watch repair). Appropriately enough, he lives in a Sears kit home with his wife, Vicki, on the west side of town. (Their three children are grown and gone.) Framed pictures suggest eclectic tastes: a Degas ballet print, a 1920s abstract with Art Deco touches, a psychedelic Peter Max poster.

Raised in Philadelphia, Blanshard came to Ann Arbor in 1974, at age twenty-five, to visit his sister, who was then in graduate school. He says he knew quickly Ann Arbor was for him; he liked small, but he also liked a lively arts scene. Blanshard took some classes at Washtenaw Community College, but schooling just didn't interest him. He had a talent for computers, knew how to sell, and found lucrative work at various companies around metro Detroit, specializing in selling Internet access through high-speed phone lines. He was working for an answering service

company in Southfield when he spotted and purchased his first vintage phone. About five years ago, he turned what had been a hobby into a second career.

Dressed in jeans and a cranberry-colored shirt, Blanshard is reticent about his own life but quite willing to expound about his fascination with old phones. He admires the sturdy technology that went into the early instruments, which he buys and sells on eBay and at antique malls. Less frequently, he also gets them from individuals wanting to unload Grandma's old set. Doing his best to restore beat-up instruments to their original handsomeness, he paints, cleans, and rewires—the trickiest part, since he insists on using correct, period wires even inside the housing, where no one but another repairperson will see. "I'm a purist," he explains. "I want my phones to be as original as possible."

Though the market for vintage phones may be past its peak, he has no plans to retire a second time. "I will do this forever," he says, "because it interests me." And every once in a great while, he gets a glamour job—most notably when he re-created the vintage phones and switchboard for Detroit's Motown Museum in 1995.

"They asked me how much it would cost," Blanshard remembers. "I told them, I just want to go to the gala"—the grand reopening party, where donors could wine and dine with former Motown royalty. Always attentive to detail, he'd enlisted help from the Detroit library to track down the company's original telephone number, which he'd placed on the dial of every phone. His reward came when Motown founder Berry Gordy walked in the door of the museum, glanced at the receptionist's desk, and exclaimed, "There's our old phone number!"

—Eve Silberman

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John Updike wrote about the “peculiar bliss” of golf, of how players can be so caught up in the game that they neglect even their most basic needs. He attributes golf’s power to its “immensities of space, beside which even polo and baseball are constricted pastimes ...”

The city’s Huron Hills Golf Course is 116 acres, and frames Huron Parkway just south of the river. Laid out in its earliest form in 1922, it’s dear to both some longtime golfers and its neighbors, for whose homes the course is a valued amenity.

But by the city’s calculations, Huron Hills has been losing money for years. Earlier this year the parks staff put out a request for proposals (RFP), inviting suggestions from anyone who had a better idea how to run the course. Two groups responded.

One, made up of neighbors, golfers, and park lovers, would turn the course over to a nonprofit to continue just as it is. The other, Miles of Golf, proposed to move that company’s driving range, golf academy, and pro shop to the flatter portion east of Huron Parkway, reducing the course to nine holes on the rolling hills to the west. The city’s choice could reshape one of its largest and most prominent parks.



STORM Over Huron Hills



The fight for the future of a city golf course.



Paul L. Bancel has been fighting for Huron Hills ever since the city started discussing whether to close a golf course, in 2004. Two years ago, the *Ann Arbor News* ran a photo of him at the seventh green, trying to convince city leaders and Ann Arborites that Huron Hills was worth saving.

Bancel helped found the Ann Arbor Golf Association. At the time, the group was hosting the “Three Hole Golf Outing,” where they invited the public to play or walk three holes at Huron Hills and enjoy grilled hot dogs and beverages. “Our intent was to get members of the

Ann Arbor city government out to the course to see what they’d be giving up,” he recalls.

“I’m not a pro golfer, I’m just an average golfer,” says Bancel, a senior engineer in GM’s energy division. “What caught my attention was that the city was thinking of closing a golf course.”

Bancel’s seen closed golf courses in Florida, and the sight distresses him—“It’s like going to a zoo [with] no animals in the cages,” he says. But that’s not his main argument. “Parkland is parkland,” he says. “That’s where it starts. Parkland is the way to preserve open space within a city.

“You shouldn’t use parkland to make money for the city,” says Paul Bancel (right above, with Ann Schriber and Paul Bhatia). Neighbors would cut Huron Hills’ losses by running it as a nonprofit. “It’s just not sustainable as it is now,” says Chris Mile (in jacket at left, with Casey Baker, center, and Doug Davis). The Miles of Golf partners want to move their driving range, school, and pro shop onto Huron Hills’ front nine.

“The story I tell people is a friend of mine who is a professor at Eastern came here from North Carolina. I said to him, ‘Charlie, why did you move here, to this cold climate, from North Carolina?’ He said, ‘When I interviewed for the job at Eastern, they drove us around the area, and they drove us down this parkway in Ann Arbor that sort of went through this rolling open space and, like, there was this golf course right in the middle of the city!’

“Our basic premise is you shouldn’t close a golf course to turn it into a strip mall,” Bancel says. “You shouldn’t use parkland to make money for the city.”

Bancel uses the plural because he’s part of Ann Arbor Golf, the working title of the group that wants to continue Huron Hills in its current form. Some members are golfers like himself, but its core is made up of people who live nearby. “People say, ‘this is a [not-in-my-] backyard issue,’” Bancel says. “My response is, ‘Yeah, it is. If you live in that neighborhood, it is.’ Why not? That’s legit.”

The course isn’t quite in Ted Annis’s backyard, but it’s close—only the Racquet Club of Ann Arbor separates his sprawling home off Geddes from the course’s hilly back nine. “I’m not a NIMB, but a NOOP,” Annis says: Instead of “not in my backyard,” his message is “not on our parkland.” But he then confesses he is both: “If the

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STORM Over Huron Hills

driving range is lighted, yeah, I'll see it. It reduces property values. That also should concern the city."

Some neighbors fear that once money starts pouring in, the city and Miles of Golf will want more—that a driving range would not only bring glaring lights and ugly fences, but also in the winter, god forbid, an inflatable dome.

"There's a bigger issue here," Annis says, "which is highly concerning to me." Granting a private company a concession at Huron Hills, he says, "sets an awful precedent for the rest of the parkland in the city. ... Revenue is not the purpose of parkland."

Huron Hills is in the city's Second Ward. The ward's councilmembers, Stephen Rapundalo and Tony Derezinski, "are for this commercialization," asserts Annis, clearly very upset. "They go out of their way to say it is not commercialization, and that causes me great disappointment."

Asked about Huron Hills, Derezinski defers to Rapundalo. In addition to being the senior Second Ward councilmember, Rapundalo knows Huron Hills as a golfer, as chair of the city's Golf Task Force, and as a member of the selection committee that will review the two proposals.

Bancel says that in a conversation, Rapundalo once dismissed the idea that Huron Hills could operate successfully as a nonprofit. "I don't have any recollection of that coming up in that context," Rapundalo responds. "Just for the record, I have no reason to discount or have any bias to a proposal that would be nonprofit based."

In early November, Rapundalo had not yet looked at either proposal in detail, but he insists that nothing has been prejudged. "Either one—the devil is going to be in the details," he says. "They would have to prove their fiscal and operational mettle just like anybody else, and convince us that they can do the job and execute it and meet the outcome that they're proposing to deliver."

Bancel and his allies propose to operate the course through a new entity called the Herb Fowler Foundation of Huron Hills (the name honors a beloved late golf course staffer). In their proposal, they say the foundation will "emulate the success of the [independently run] Leslie Science and Nature Center." They note that they are "not asking the City to finance any capital improvements to the course. The Foundation will continue to operate the course in its current configuration. When the Foundation receives its federal tax-exempt status, it plans to raise money to supplement operations and begin an endowment for the course."

As Bancel describes it, accepting the foundation's proposal for Huron Hills sounds like a no-brainer: "It preserves it

as open space; it preserves it as a historic legacy; it keeps it open for juniors and seniors, and it's easy to do."

Financially, he concedes, "We don't bring in any money, but we save the city money. We save the city \$250,000 a year. And the city loses \$250,000 on the books now with Huron Hills."

Miles of Golf founder Chris Mile meets me in his shop on Carpenter Road. "This is probably what it would be like at Huron Hills, in terms of size, what you see here," he says. (Actually, it would be a little bigger—according to the proposal he currently has 9,000 square feet, while the new building would have 11,000.) "We sell shoes, golf bags, golf clubs, anything associated with golf."

Mile says he and his partners had been "thinking about talking to the city for a long, long time, because we knew they were kind of struggling [at Huron Hills]

Some neighbors fear that a driving range would not only bring glaring lights and ugly fences, but also in the winter, god forbid, an inflatable dome.

... we always wondered what was going to happen to it." At the city's request, one of his partners, Doug Davis, joined the city's Golf Task Force. "But in terms of really getting into it," Mile says, "it's been about a year."

They don't own their current location, and though they have a lease that runs through 2033, they and the property owner both have options to get out. "It's been in the back of our minds that we were going to have to look for another spot," Mile says.

He points out that Huron Hills has already been greatly altered over the years—some of the neighboring homes were built on what used to be the course, and Huron Parkway cut through it in the 1960s. And he disputes neighbors' assumption that a driving range will necessarily be an eyesore. "Modern golf ranges look a little different than you used to see with the big fences," he says. "The idea now is to make them look as much like a golf course as you can."

Mile denies any interest in a dome—he says they're rarely successful, and he'd be glad to rule it out in the city's contract. As for lights, he says, "in the summer, here, we can play golf until ten o'clock. We do have a few lights that we don't use all that much. It isn't something that's really essential to our business."

The Carpenter range has netting to protect the apartments at the back of the property, "but there [at Huron Hills], there wouldn't be any need for that," Mile adds. "It's just too big." So big, in fact, that he's suggested that Project Grow could repurpose the farther reaches for a community garden.

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Mile says his proposal took the layout of the Carpenter range and "basically put the footprint on the first seven holes" at Huron Hills. "It fits very well—just taking this and moving it over there." The area west of the parkway would continue to operate as a 9-hole golf course.

In November, the selection committee hadn't even looked at the financial side of the proposals—Rapundalo says it will do so only if its review of the rest of the packages finds sufficient merit to move forward to interviewing the presenters. But with a golf shop, school, and driving range, plus the remaining traditional course, Miles of Golf surely would have a fatter cash flow than the Herb Fowler Foundation. Since the RFP specifies that proposals must show a financial benefit to the city, that would seem to give Mile a big edge.

But he and his partners also have a big liability: they'd probably need the city to finance their new building. That's because the RFP limits the maximum length of any agreement to twenty years. At that point, the city could reclaim control of the property—along with the building.

"Because of the time frame they put on it, it would be pretty difficult—although we're still trying to do it—to fund it privately," Mile says. "What our proposal says is we would pay them back [for the investment], plus some additional money."

Mile estimates the cost at \$3.2 million. "If we were to move over there, we'd have to duplicate what you see here," he says. "I think the building they have there now is 3,000 square feet, something like that, and the maintenance shed is another 2,000. So it would be bigger, but it's not like there aren't buildings there now. It would just be bigger and newer."

City parks and recreation manager Colin Smith says a city council work session last December put Huron Hills back in play. "Huron—golf courses in general—have been an ongoing concern in terms of the fact that they are requiring subsidy from the general fund," Smith explains. He summarizes council's challenge to the parks staff like this: "Is there a way to provide golf at Huron which is more cost effective, that could provide a better experience for people?"

Smith calls Huron Hills a "sensitive" issue. It certainly is. Three years ago, neighbors outraged by a staff proposal to sell "the wooded property around the back nine" mobilized a write-in campaign that very nearly unseated Stephen Rapundalo. As a precaution, the RFP was vetted by both the Golf Task Force and the Parks Advisory Commission (PAC) before it went out. Both groups will comment on the responses as well, providing input to the selection committee.

Smith sits on the committee, along with his boss, community services administrator Sumedh Bahl, Leslie Park golf director Doug Kelly, PAC chair Julie Grand, Golf Task Force member Ed Walsh, Rapundalo, and former Ward 2 councilmember Mike Reid.

The two plans "are obviously very, very different proposals," Smith says. But both, he notes, comply with the city's



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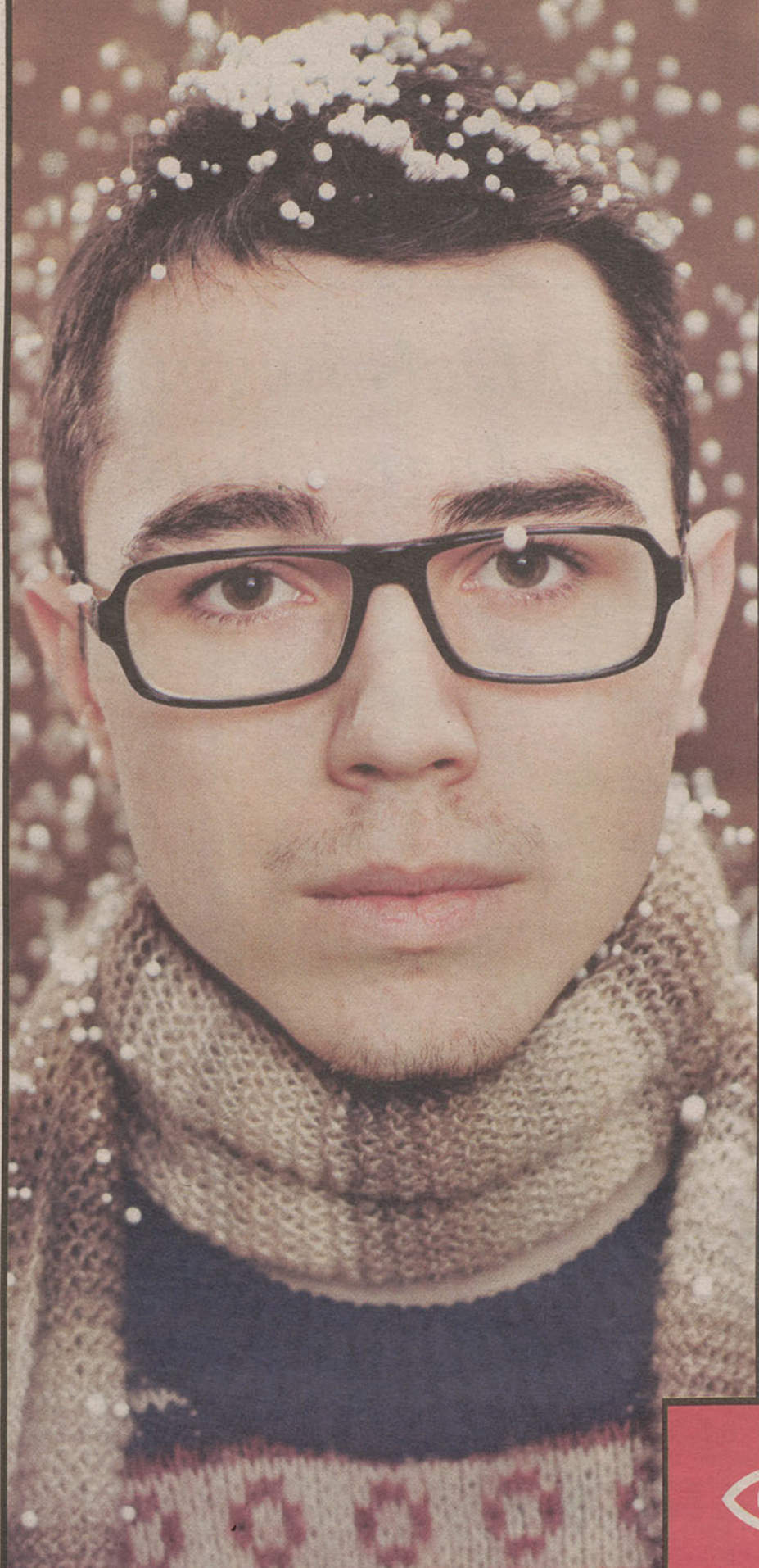
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STORM Over Huron Hills

baseline requirements: "There is a lot of concern over this," he acknowledges. But "if you read the RFP, it says, in a number of places, that Huron [Hills] is to remain golf, it is to remain parkland—it is not being sold."

Smith's own feelings for Huron Hills run deep. "I don't think it's any secret to anybody who knows me that I've spent a lot of time at that course, and I'm very fond of it," he says. "I learned how to play golf there."

He first worked at the course as a high-schooler in 1989, and continued as a U-M student before going abroad to complete his undergrad and master's degrees (his father, a retired U-M art history prof, is Scottish). Then, in 1998, he says, "I ended up having one of those moments—'I want to do what I love.'" Returning to the parks department, he "took a job teaching golf at Huron Hills for kids, making no money." He eventually became a full-time supervisor there before being reassigned as part of an earlier cost-cutting drive.

When Paul Bancel explains why he cares so deeply about Huron Hills, he talks about its accessibility to young players and senior citizens. Smith, a golfer who got his start on the course and whose life direction ultimately changed as a result, seems like just the kind of player Bancel has in mind. But though Smith loves Huron Hills—and says he was "very close" to Herb Fowler—he doesn't accept many of the foundation's assumptions.

When asked how the foundation would reduce Huron Hills' \$250,000-a-year deficit, Bancel responds that a lot of the loss is depreciation—an accounting deduction that reflects the aging of the courses' assets, but that doesn't need to be paid in cash. In addition, he says, the city charges its golf courses for the cost of supporting their retirees—a \$50,000 obligation that wouldn't burden the Herb Fowler Foundation—as well as hefty administrative services and information technology fees.

But Smith says Bancel is wrong about the depreciation—all the depreciation charged against the city's two golf courses is applied to the newer facilities at Leslie Park. Though the two courses operate as a single fund, "we obviously look to see how each course is doing individually," Smith says, and Huron Hills' assets are fully depreciated.

Smith agrees that the course's profit-and-loss statement would look better without the municipal service and information technology charges. But even without them, he maintains, "Huron would still operate at a loss. I wish I could tell you otherwise." And of course if Huron Hills stops paying the municipal service and IT charges, costs will increase for other departments.

Ditching the retiree costs is, from the city's point of view, similarly problematic. Removing Huron Hills from the city's

reckoning won't make that obligation go away—it would just shift the entire burden to Leslie Golf Course.

What about the neighbors' argument that Miles of Golf would turn Huron Hills' front holes into a strip mall? "We already have a maintenance building and a clubhouse there," Smith responds, including a pro shop. While Miles of Golf's store would be bigger, "I don't think if you have read the proposals or read the RFP that you can for a minute think it's going to be turned into a strip mall."

Chris Mile doesn't think the existing clubhouse is anything to brag about. "That's the biggest eyesore in our minds," he says, "the buildings and the way they're situated now." Even before moving his store, his proposal calls for putting "a lot more plantings around it, to sort of hide it." Phase II would be the new building, which would be set back much farther from the road. In Phase III, they'd demolish the old clubhouse and build a new one across the parkway for the 9-hole course.

Paul Bancel questions the viability of a 9-hole course, especially on the back nine. "People play the front nine because it is easier to walk. Stats show half of the people play eighteen [holes], half play nine. But the half that play nine, play the front."

What specifically makes Huron Hills' back nine undesirable, Bancel says, is that it "is short, hilly, and it floods." He predicts that if Mile's proposal is accepted, the company won't operate the golf course for long: "The hilly nine will be the mayor's hiking ground in a couple years."

According to Colin Smith, though, those statistics don't match Huron Hills' reality. "About eighty percent of the rounds at Huron are played as nine-hole rounds," he says. "We don't keep track of if they're on the front or the back, but a lot of people come specifically to play the back. Certainly in my experience of working there, more people come with the intention or desire to play the back than the front."

Chris Mile says that Huron Hills' basic problem is that it "doesn't have the [player] volume necessary to make it an 18-hole course." He can see a 9-hole course being more successful, because it would cost less to maintain. And since his driving range, school, and shop operation is self-supporting on Carpenter, "we're assuming it can support itself there. We don't know what the golf course will do, but if this is as successful there as it is here, we figure we can take that chance and cover it."

Miles of Golf's plan would not, however, support the city's retirees, or pay its administrative and IT fees. "If they make someone go over there and do exactly the

same thing [the city is doing], it's going to have the same result," Mile says. "Nobody is going to really want to do that. Something has to change."

"Ultimately, council is the decision-maker," Smith says. But it's a long and winding road from Huron Hills to City Hall. Smith explains that first, both proposals will be reviewed by the selection committee, which may invite one or both groups in for an interview to further explain their plans. (Rapundalo says he thinks that both groups are likely to make that cut.) The Golf Task Force and the Parks Advisory Commission will weigh in. Since the Miles of Golf proposal calls for construction, Smith notes, if it advances the planning commission would probably get involved, too.

The neighbors are prepared to fight the Miles of Golf proposal every step of the way. Organized as the Ann Arbor Parks Preservation Association, they've already hired an attorney, Susan Morrison. In November, Morrison sent city council a five-page letter asking that the Miles of Golf proposal be rejected, arguing

that it violates both the city's RFP and its zoning ordinance.

Colin Smith says that while he's not qualified to address legal questions, the RFP was reviewed by the attorney's office before it went out. As the Observer went to press, city attorney Stephen Postema had not responded to requests for comment on the neighbors' letter.

To no one's surprise, council did not act on the request to reject the Miles of Golf proposal. But Morrison's letter appears intended less as a preemptive strike than to lay the groundwork for a future lawsuit. Ted Annis believes that the issue will end up in court, and says the neighbors are prepared for that if they lose at city council.

For his part, Chris Mile seems baffled by the effort to preserve what looks to him like a failing operation. "It's just not sustainable as it is now," he says. "It's just not." If the city rejects his proposal, he says, "there's a potential that they're going to have to keep paying for the neighbors around there to have this kind of little golf course that nobody's using."

Even a course with few players, though, has the magic John Updike wrote of, a dreamlike quality of time suspended. Unfortunately the golf dream is just that. "All my adult life I had been measured at six feet," Updike writes. "No more, no less. My image of myself was that of a six-foot man who could hit a five-iron 150 yards. In all dimensions, I was shrinking."

So might Huron Hills. ■

Parks manager Colin Smith agrees that the profit-and-loss statement would look better without the city's service and information technology charges. But even without them, he maintains, "Huron Hills would still operate at a loss."

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MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY PLANS
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WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM?

BY NATALIE BURG

Did someone just mention money?

For fifteen minutes, DDA executive director Susan Pollay has led the Mutually Beneficial Committee through the first draft of an agreement between the city of Ann Arbor and its Downtown Development Authority. For more than six months they've been negotiating the terms under which the DDA manages the city's parking, but this is the first time they've seen words on paper.

Though the committee has seven members, only two are at this late-October session—Roger Hewitt of the DDA and councilmember Christopher Taylor—along with Pollay and the city's public services administrator, Sue McCormick. It's Taylor who brings up money: could language be added, he wonders, that would "hold the city harmless" if the revisions reduce the city's share of parking enforcement revenues (read: ticket money)?

Formed last spring after the DDA's transfers to the city hit \$12 million, the

committee has the job of negotiating how much more cash the city will get, and what it is willing to give up to get it. But until now, the tug-of-war has been over how much the DDA's power might grow. Taylor's comment is the first time anyone has talked finances—and he's played a card no one saw coming.

The committee seems unsure how to respond, so Taylor explains. "If the DDA is looking to move to a compliance-based system"—meaning more revenue from parking fees and less from parking tickets—"we can expect enforcement revenues to decline, which is an asset of the city."

"Ticket revenues have been steadily declining for several years," Pollay points out. "The difficult thing about creating a 'hold harmless' agreement would be that we'd have to determine at what point, when they continue to decline, it would be as a result of DDA action."

"It would certainly be very complicated," Taylor replies cheerfully. "But I'm confident if we left that to our very smart staff members you'll be able to figure it out."

According to schoolyard rules, it's the DDA's turn to get its back scratched. They've been waiting since May, when, for the first time, they asked for something in exchange for the \$2 million a year they've been giving to the city's general fund. The first deadline for concluding a deal passed at the end of October.

The DDA's board is appointed by the city, but the group has its own tax revenue and mission to enhance downtown. It's managed the city's parking structures since 1992, rebuilding and replacing neglected decks while also paying the city rent that approached \$1 million a year. But as the budget crisis deepened in 2005, the city wanted more.

The DDA agreed to give an additional \$10 million over a period of ten years, at a rate of up to \$2 million annually. That brought the maximum yearly transfer close to \$3 million.

Within five years the \$10 million maximum was tapped out, and, like most cities, Ann Arbor was still scrambling for revenue. To bridge the gap, this spring the city asked the DDA for another \$2 million.

"They needed it right away," recalls DDA board member Gary Boren. "They had a budget shortfall and were threatening to lay off police and fire employees. Whether that was a political stunt or not, we didn't want to be the cause of that."

In a whirlwind of ultimatums, disagreement, and public outcry on both sides of the issue, the DDA board in May voted 7-4 to commit the funds, with no strings attached—or, at most, with the understanding that strings would be attached at a later date. Among those critical of that outcome was former DDA board member Rene Greff, who contended the transfers ran counter to the mission of the DDA and violated the board's fiduciary duty.

Boren voted against the gift. "I wasn't suggesting that [the city was] being disingenuous" about its need for the money, he says. "But I felt that it was premature to give them the money before the rest of the agreement was nailed down."

Board member Roger Hewitt voted yes. "We felt there were things we wanted

to change [in the original agreement], and the city wanted the financial changes in the agreement," he explains. "There appeared to be a structure for a new agreement in place."

That structure took shape as the Mutually Beneficial Committee—so named because it's charged with reaching an agreement that benefits both parties.

In early discussions, the DDA came on strong: one proposal called for the group to take outright ownership of city property downtown. While that might not seem an unreasonable return for \$12 million, and potentially much more down the road, the city quickly made it clear that wasn't going to happen. After a few rounds through the Mutually Beneficial Committee, the proposal was reduced to giving the DDA the ability to formally guide the development process.

The idea is that the DDA would get involved long before the city issues a request for proposals (RFP) to redevelop a site. It would research the properties and consult with the economic development group SPARK on developer recruitment strategies and available incentives. After a public visioning process, the DDA would prepare site plans for each property to guide the RFP process.

"I am excited about the DDA's proposal," said MBC and council member Christopher Taylor. "They have energy, expertise and a commitment to imagine a better downtown." However, Taylor adds in the same breath, the development of city-owned assets "is ultimately a city responsibility"—meaning that final authority will remain with City Council.

The committee also curbed the DDA's parking plans. The group first floated the idea of extending its current authority over parking garages and attended lots to metered lots and on-street parking, including the parking enforcement staff.

Managing the entire system, the DDA argued, would further its goal of making downtown parking more "user-friendly." Among other things, that would mean writing fewer parking tickets.



COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR AND DDA REP ROGER HEWITT AT THE "KLINE'S LOT" ON WILLIAM—ONE OF THE CITY-OWNED SITES THE DDA MAY GAIN AN EXPANDED ROLE IN DEVELOPING.

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"People don't want to pay parking tickets," Hewitt says. "Most of the complaints we have are from ticketing, not from the parking rates."

With that in mind, the DDA has already reshaped the parts of the system it controls. Wherever possible, it's replaced parking meters with either human attendants or automated systems. Instead of guessing how much to pay in advance, drivers are charged as they leave, for exactly the amount of time they're used. Because they never run out of quarters, misjudge how long they'll be, or gamble that they won't be caught, those drivers never get parking tickets.

At street meters, drivers make all of those mistakes—and every month, thousands of them are ticketed. In the last fiscal year, the city collected \$1.8 million in parking fines. The money went directly into the malnourished general fund.

But as Pollay pointed out, ticket revenue has been shrinking rapidly—a year earlier, it was \$2.5 million. That's partly thanks to the DDA's own innovations. The new solar-powered meters the group paid to install throughout downtown accept credit cards, and a driver who's running late can add time from any other meter, or even online.

From the city's point of view, the lost ticket revenue is already bad enough. But if the DDA took control of all parking, it would either take the remaining ticket revenue with it or reduce it even further. The city wasn't having any of that.

The official response was that the DDA couldn't legally take over parking enforcement because its staff didn't have authority to access police records. Though some DDA members disagreed, the board backed off its plan in favor of a less comprehensive approach.

"We determined that what the DDA wanted was not to take over the [parking enforcement] bureaucracy," says Taylor, "and by working together with the city, we could achieve their goals without disrupting current practices."

Assuming city council looks favorably on the DDA's current proposal, members of the DDA may be on board with Taylor's approach. The draft amendment includes several upgrades to the board's authority over downtown parking, all of which fall under the DDA's proposed new right to "operate and maintain the complete public parking system within an established Parking District."

If the DDA gets what it wants, it would gain some authority over enforcement staff. By monitoring minimum staffing levels as well as enforcement hours and areas, it can make enforcement more responsive—and, by making ticketing more uniform, can potentially increase compliance.

For drivers, the biggest initial change would be that a good parking spot would cost more than a bad one. "The best practices say to use demand parking systems downtown," Hewitt explains. "If the space on the street right in front of Gratz is the best place in town, then it should be the most expensive spot." Likewise, those parking in less desirable spaces should have to put less in the meter.

While some spots would cost more and some less, the DDA expects that overall, compliance revenue will rise when the changes are complete. It will have to, because a system that expands compliance will inevitably mean less ticket revenue—and, as Taylor made clear at the October meeting, the city wants the DDA to make up that loss.

Besides juggling hourly rates, the most likely way to boost compliance revenue is by extending meter enforcement into the evening—something the DDA is already on record as wanting to do. "What may happen is that the city may see revenue from tickets decline some, and the DDA may see the revenue from street meters increase," Hewitt says. "We just need to find an agreement that will work for both sides."

That resolution will play directly into a bigger financial question: exactly how much money will the city receive annually for these amendments to the parking agreement? While everyone expects the current payments of approximately \$3 million to continue, the draft agreement would replace the current flat rate with a percentage of parking-fund revenue—in effect, a tax on parkers for the benefit of the city's general fund.

The proposed amendments officially reached the city in a series of work sessions in November. Now it's down to haggling over the details.

"I worry that we could be cutting either a political deal or a legal deal," says DDA board member Boren. He'd prefer a "legal" deal that explicitly details the DDA's authority with respect to both parking and the downtown planning/RFP process. "Everything would be right down there in ink," he says.

But he suspects what may emerge instead is a "political" deal—one that would draw much broader outlines around the DDA and city's roles. If that happens, he says, "we won't really know what we're getting [in the development process] until we go after it on a parcel-by-parcel basis."

It's such an injection of politics into the DDA's decisions that worries some former board members. "The mission of the DDA is to spend public dollars to spark private reinvestment," Rene Greff told the board in advance of its May vote to help with the city budget shortfall. "This resolution clearly will not serve that mission."

Like Greff, Fred Beal was on the board when the transfers began, but was not reappointed when his term expired. "This is not entirely a revenue issue," Beal says of the current negotiations. "It should be a parking management issue."

"I don't know if I can say for sure that different decisions would have been made if we [Beal, Greff, and Rob Aldrich, who also was not reappointed] were still on the board. But I can say there would be more pushback on this issue."

Former DDA chair Ed Shaffran also criticizes the transfers. "The DDA has become the ATM of the city," he complains. "The DDA has a mission, and it's doing what it's supposed to do. I think [the city] has overstepped their bounds. They're taking \$2-3 million and filling a shortfall of the general fund. That's bull."

The current board, though, is more sympathetic to the city's needs. Most of the DDA's funding comes from the rising value of downtown properties—a system called tax increment financing, or TIF. Hewitt points out that while the DDA's TIF revenue legally must be dedicated to its mission, "the TIF fund is not involved" in the transfers. "The parking fund is where all this money is coming from, and we have sufficient revenue in the system to handle what we're working on right now."

Hewitt says the proposed amendments to the parking agreement should benefit visitors, businesspeople, and future development. Flexible parking rates and enforcement, for example, could allow for a more user-friendly experience for downtown parkers.

"If we were to see modifications to the parking agreement that take our parking demand concepts into consideration, and the DDA is able to undertake the master planning process for downtown properties, I think that would be very fair," Hewitt says.

The price the DDA will pay for those benefits depends on how long the agreement runs. The original contract was set to expire in 2015, with the possibility of being renewed through 2018. The DDA has proposed extending the contract to 2033, when the group's own authorization will be up for renewal.

If council agrees, the city would gain more than \$40 million in additional transfers to the general fund over the life of the agreement—and possibly more, depending on the outcome of the hold-harmless negotiations. By comparison, the DDA's new 600-space underground parking structure on Fifth Ave. is expected to cost about \$50 million.

What the DDA gets in return remains to be seen. The current draft outlines plenty of specifics, promising the DDA more control. But the DDA itself was the author of that draft, which will surely change as council reviews it.

Boren hopes that councilmembers will keep the group's unique status in mind. "The DDA is not some city department that needs to make cuts in hard times," he points out. "DDAs were created so there would be a natural tension between the DDA and the city, in Ann Arbor

or any other place. That's why we operate independently."

Steve Bean, who ran unsuccessfully for mayor this fall, thinks the transfers violate the Michigan Supreme Court's "Bolt Decision," which bars cities from skirting taxation limits by raising fees. Ann Arbor city attorney Stephen Postema disagrees. Mayor Hieftje relays his response that "the Bolt analysis only applies to assessments on real property," and therefore doesn't restrict parking rates.

If Postema is correct, only the DDA can limit the amount the city draws from the parking system—or at least, require that downtown gain something in return. Boren is still waiting for that reciprocal back-scratch. "I don't want to be glib," he says, "but there's a possibility we'll get something, or there's a possibility we'll get nothing."

Councilmember Taylor argues that "The DDA does and will manage the parking system well and for the benefit for the downtown." But, he adds, "I think it is for the benefit of the downtown to pay spinoff revenues to the city to provide services for residents."

And that, to downtown stakeholders such as Boren, Shaffran, and Beal, could be just the problem. Beal points out that while the city approves the DDA's budget

and appoints its members, other governmental and educational units also sacrificed some of their tax bases to support its TIF fund.

"I'm sure those entities are looking at the city feeding off

the trough, and thinking that if the city is going to take theirs, why shouldn't they get some back too?" Beal says.

He isn't the only one asking that question. After a November article in the Ann Arbor Chronicle raised the issue, Ann Arbor District Library head Josie Parker told her board that she would be seeking legal advice on the matter.

Boren, meanwhile, is looking forward to spelling out just what the benefit to downtown will be. "In spite of my skepticism, I don't think anyone is being disingenuous," he stresses. "I don't believe we're being cheated in any way. But when you're dealing with a political entity, you don't need to be cheated to not get what you want. I want to try to make sure that doesn't happen."

The good news for the DDA is that budget season is once again approaching. After all, the one certainty to emerge from the negotiations so far is that the city is reliant on that nearly \$3 million coming from the DDA. Though council managed to get this year's transfer without making any commitments, it will be hard to ask for another payment until a deal is done.

"Even as I voted against [the initial \$2 million]," says Boren, "I knew they would come back to us again and ask for more money. So if we don't get anything out of the bargain this time—we will the next." ■

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Joe Meza, Barbara Wilson, and James Snider

How a one-man Volvo shop grew into a car-care giant

by James Leonard

It was the kind of discussion business owners dread. "The economy took a huge toll on us in 2008," says Joe Meza, the founder, owner, and driving force behind ArborMotion, the import car care conglomerate on State Circle. As business slumped, Meza recalls, "I told James that I needed to see a 20 percent reduction in payroll. And he said no!"

Meza had hired James Snider only a year before, to replace another general manager who didn't work out. "He didn't see it [the recession] was affecting us," remembers Meza, a big man with a stubbly beard and tousled salt-and-pepper hair. "But I saw how it would—and soon. Also," he adds with a smile, "James is very paternalistic. He's like a mother hen with his employees."

"It's a strength and a weakness," admits the fresh-faced Snider, who's thirty-three but has the self-possession of someone twice his age. "I didn't feel we'd exhausted every other possible option. And I felt like we'd invested a lot in these employees—and that they'd invested a lot in the company."

Snider was the manager, but Meza was the owner—and if Snider couldn't cut costs, he would. "I told him I was coming back [to run the company]," Meza recalls of the October 2008 showdown. "And that was enough to get him to make the moves that had to be made. He learned the hard way."

"It was an extremely difficult part of my learning experience," Snider agrees with a pained smile. At the time, ArborMotion had twenty-four employees, and "I told Joe there was no way we could function if we laid off 20 percent." Instead, driven by Meza's ultimatum, "we looked at expenses, analyzed every line, and made cuts—but not in livelihood." To keep the staff intact, Snider says, "I'd go [unpaid for] multiple paychecks, and some others voluntarily took pay cuts." He finally did have to lay someone off this past January. "But we were able to bring them back in July—and when we announced it at a team meeting, he got a standing ovation." Snider has tears in his eyes from the memory.

Avoiding layoffs allowed the company not only to survive but to grow again

Poetry in Motion

as soon as the economy improved. Sales are up 10 percent this year, and staff has grown to twenty-eight, including two newly hired mechanics—one specializing in Porsches, the other in domestic brands. This year alone, Snider says, ArborMotion will work on 5,000 cars.

When Joe Meza started Swedish Engineering in 1981, it was just him and his wife, Barbara Wilson, who kept the books. And he only did Volvos. "At that time, nobody specialized," explains Meza, an Ecuadorian whose family moved to Ann Arbor in 1962. "But I'd worked on Volvos, and I felt like they spoke my language."

After eight years as a one-man, one-hoist operation, he moved to a bigger space on South Industrial. "I was ready," he recalls. "And when I hired the two best mechanics in town, business took off really fast." He eventually outgrew that five-hoist shop, and in 2004 he moved again—this time to ArborMotion's current fifteen-hoist space off State just south of I-94.

"It was pretty scary," recalls Meza. "I was making it ten times the size and without having ten times the business."

To fill the building he bought German-car specialist Eurotec Motors, gaining both a master mechanic and a client list rich in Mercedes, BMW, and Audi owners. At the same time, he hired experienced Toyota-Lexus mechanics Tom O'Connor and James Bandkau to staff a new division called Asian Import Repairs. But while his sales grew, profits disappeared.

"Moving put a huge strain on the entire operation," says Meza, "and I took the biggest hit money-wise: it ate away all my savings. Barbie and I didn't pay ourselves, and for the next three years, we were just barely able to make it through."

Meza frankly says that the business had outgrown his management style. "I operate by gut feeling. I'm very impatient;

when something gets in my head I have to do it." After his first general manager left, Meza interviewed many more candidates before happening upon James Snider in May 2007.

Snider, an MSU business grad, was working as a consultant at the time. When he heard about the job from a client, "I said 'Absolutely not! I don't know anything about cars!' But she said I really should try it. So I met with Joe and we talked for a while and then he showed me around the shop. I said to myself, 'This guy has got an incredible company with tremendous potential!'"

There was a "but"—a big but. "It was making a profit but not nearly what a sustainable company should be making," says Snider. "Sustainable meaning 'able to stay in business.'"

The impulsive Meza instantly decided Snider was just the man to find and fix the problem. "I felt like I was talking to the person I was looking for," he says. "He didn't have automotive experience, and a rational

person would say that this isn't a good fit. But I thought he would be perfect for the business, [that] having a good business background and not being a car guy would be a real asset."

Snider started out by "shadowing" every employee—following them through their workdays. "It was a little nerve-racking because people wondered if their jobs were secure," he remembers. "But as I learned what they do, I learned to respect who they were and the work they do, and then they started showing me respect, and we learned to trust each other."

Too often, when businesses talk about "raising productivity," what they mean is "cutting staff." But Snider's key insight was that the growing garage needed more people—not less. "We had two service advisors dispatching work to five techs, and they [each] had no idea what the other was doing," he explains. "In the old shop it was easy to manage, but we're at nine

After the move, Meza recalls, "Barbie and I didn't pay ourselves, and for the next three years, we were just barely able to make it through."

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full-time and two part-time technicians, and it was just too confusing. But after the garage added a dispatcher who takes the work order from the service advisors and gets it to everyone who needs to see it, tech efficiency has gone up over 20 percent."

"He complemented all of my weaknesses," Meza says. "He is much more organized, better follow-through, prepared, knows how to prioritize things, and he's a good team-builder. I am great at starting things, and James is good at finishing things. My talent is to start a business, get it off the ground, and then pass it on to someone else to take it to the next level."

In addition to rebranding the company as ArborMotion, Snider is slowly buying Meza out. "I made a minimum five-year commitment because I knew it would take at least that long to get the company where it should be," he explains. "But I also fell in love with the business."

Both of the mechanics who helped Meza's business take off in the early 1990s are still with the company. "I personally have a lot of customers who want just me to work on their car," says Mark Newbound, a Volvo specialist. Kyle Brodie, another Volvo specialist, hired in right after Newbound. "We offer a two-year parts and labor guarantee," Brodie points out. "Sometimes it bites us in the butt, but we learn—and we figure it out so it doesn't happen again." Asked how long he'll stay, Brodie laughs. "Until I become a professional golfer! No, this is my career for the rest of my life. We're going to be the number-one repair shop in this area—and I mean soon."

Two customers I spoke with one morning backed the mechanics' claims. Patricia Sonntag was in getting her Audi's rear brakes done. "The quality of the work here is very superior," she said. "I've raced cars for twenty years all over the country, and this place is outstanding."

Barbara Niess-May, whose 2000 Subaru has 175,000 miles on it, was in to have a squeak checked out. "They charge a lot, but their mechanics are fast and efficient, and the work is of very high quality," she says. "Plus, they recognize women make the majority of car decisions, and there's no sexism here. Everyone is treated with respect."

As executive director of SafeHouse, Niess-May has another relationship with ArborMotion: the garage runs a fundraiser for the domestic violence shelter called Oil Change for a Change. "For a \$25 donation, you get an oil change, a winter inspection, and a hand car wash," Niess-May explains. "This will be our third year, and they've raised between \$8,000 and \$11,000 a year."

Snider likes nonprofits—his first job out of college was running the Council



MARK BIALEK

More than 100 car buffs showed up in November to welcome Porsche expert Tim Pott. It's the second specialty repair shop Pott's sold to ArborMotion—Meza also bought his previous company, Eurotec, in 2006.

of Asian Pacific Americans, a group his Korean-born mother helped to found. He's so committed to SafeHouse that he sent his whole staff to tour the shelter. But he's a little touchy about Niess-May's comment that ArborMotion charges a lot.

ArborMotion bills most diagnostic work at \$105 an hour, which Snider says is comparable to dealer rates. But a repair's final cost, he insists, "has nothing to do with labor rate—that's irrelevant. It's, how smart are your techs, how experienced?" When mechanics specialize in one brand, he says, "all of a sudden [their] efficiency goes up." For example, he says, his techs can resolder rather than replace an expensive Volvo brake control module, and check every Mini they see for a minor coolant leak that, if undetected, can lead to major engine damage.

When he buys a business, Snider figures half of the purchase price reflects the staff's expertise. "At end of day, why are [customers] going to Rennstatt?" he asks rhetorically. "It's not the tools."

Rennstatt is ArborMotion's newest acquisition—and the second company it's bought from Tim Pott. Pott was also the owner of Eurotec. When he sold his previous company in 2006, ArborMotion acquired his customer list, tools, and parts inventory. But while his master tech and service advisor moved to State Circle, Pott stayed behind on Trade Center Drive to open Rennstatt, German for "racing shop."

"They were interested in taking Porsche and me," recalls Pott, "but I had an attractive lease and I'd worked on Porsches for my entire career, and I'd always wanted to try a Porsche-only business." Pott says Rennstatt's business grew, "but I found out that at fifty-eight it's hard to manage on your own. It's a physically demanding job, and I'm competing with young folks more robust than I am—hard as that is to admit," he laughs. So he approached Snider about a second sale.

"I'm beside myself," says Snider. "Tim is one of the best technicians in southeast Michigan, and he's the Porsche guru. They were dream negotiations. Everybody put their cards on the table, and there were no issues and no concerns. This is beneficial for both of us—and we built

him a retirement strategy."

"I'm really looking forward to this," says Pott. "But I don't feel like I'm going to retire anytime soon. I'm going there on a five-year contract, but I'm hoping to be there beyond that. My hope is to keel over at a workbench some day."

Snider's also expanding into American brands—a departure from Joe Meza's focus on import lines. Snider says that they've always worked on the occasional Ford and Chevy, but mainly as a convenience to their import customers who also owned domestics. This past summer, though, he realized that American cars had become the fastest growing part of ArborMotion's business. He did what Joe Meza would have done and recruited a specialist—WCC instructor John Sykes. "When we brought him on board, our proficiency and efficiency on working on domestics shot through the roof," says Snider. "We're paying him high dollar value, but he's so efficient he makes up for it."

Now that ArborMotion is growing again, Snider is thinking about expansion. "We can add another four to eight hoists here," he says. After that, he'd like to "open a satellite location on the northwest side of town."

When that happens, it'll be ArborMotion's first move without Joe Meza. The same year Snider joined the business, Meza and Wilson purchased land in Mindo in his native Ecuador, and the next year, they built a second home there in 2008. They turned the home into a restaurant and then expanded into chocolate, a longtime love of Wilson's. She and Meza now buy cacao beans from nearby growers, ferment and dry them, then turn them into cocoa and chocolates at their Dexter home.

Asked by email if he's happy with the way Snider worked out and with what he's doing with his life right now, Meza replies, "Yes to both. Things couldn't be better for ArborMotion, and James is a big part of it."

As for his new career: "I am very happy working on Mindo Chocolate," Meza says. "I am in Ecuador right now, the weather is great, and the food is better." ■

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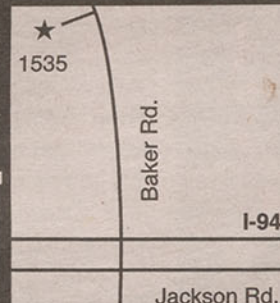
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LOOK FOR OUR 2011 RESOURCE GUIDE





The Santa Conundrum

Our 2010 Holiday Gift Guide

by Tony McReynolds

Does my ten-year-old son still believe in Santa Claus? Or does he believe that if I believe he believes in Santa Claus, he'll get more presents? I can't be sure, but I think I'm being played. Last week a classmate launched into those logistical questions we all wrestled with in our youth (i.e., one plus-sized guy, one night, all those houses, etc.). My son, who usually loves to argue, grew uncharacteristically quiet. When I caught his eye, he quickly turned away, as if afraid of what I might see.

Does my ten-year-old son still believe in Santa Claus? Or does he believe that if I believe he believes in Santa Claus, he'll get more presents?

Maybe I'm reading too much into this, but whenever the subject of Santa comes up, I can only describe his behavior as cagey. Meanwhile, he's told me what he wants, and I don't think he much cares who brings it. So I've been trekking around town to see what's out there, and I'm passing along a few ideas.

For kids like my son who freak out if their peas touch their mashed potatoes (and for adults who still do), Downtown Home & Garden on Ashley has a \$25

(Clockwise from top): Ugly Dolls at Vault of Midnight, an Alexander Kalifano globe at Four Directions, Schakolad's edible chess set, and a dress painted by elephants, at Perpetua.

state-of-the art Eco stainless steel lunchbox; its three stacked containers and an inner box to keep wet foods like applesauce or salads from turning crackers and bread to mush. For gardeners who get freaked out by thorns and brambles, they also carry Foxgloves Gauntlet gloves; they're \$35 and perfect for rooting around deceptively innocent-looking garden beds, even though they look more like something

you'd wear to flourish an épée than to prune the rosebushes.

The Best Use of a Scatological Pun to Name a Product Award has to go to the iPod, available at Moosejaw on Main Street. The kit contains a small aluminum spade for digging holes when nature calls in the woods. How did manufacturer Sea to Summit get away with the name? They didn't. Apple caught up with them, but there are still iPods in stores until the name changes—making this offbeat \$20 gift item not just practical, but collectible. For the boulderers on your list (it's a specialized, ropeless form of rock climbing), a foldable, portable bouldering crash pad will break your fall from ten to twelve feet—more than enough to protect you if you decide to scale the Rock at Hill and Washtenaw. They start at \$140.

Vault of Midnight on Main has a great collection of comics and graphic novels, but they also carry Ugly Dolls, deliberately eccentric plush dolls that look sort of like cuddly microbes, or maybe like something Matt Groening used to doodle before *The Simpsons* hit it big. They start at \$8. Look for excellent family games, too, like Banagrams, Toy Fair 2009's Game of The Year, a word game whose lettered tiles come in a banana-shaped yellow zippered bag for \$15.

Four Directions on Main carries elegant Alexander Kalifano globes made of inlaid polished gemstones—some globes even use gemstones native to the countries they represent. They start at \$80, and Kalifano justifiably warns that they should be considered works of art and used as a reference tool only on an "incidental" basis. For something actually meant to be destroyed, pick up the kids a large geode

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PHOTOS

The Santa Conundrum

Our 2010 Holiday Gift Guide

from Morocco. They look a little uninspiring, like stone potatoes, but once cracked open they reveal dazzling quartz crystals inside. \$6 to \$12.

Don't like your chess opponent's last move? Eat his pawn. It's a perfectly acceptable defensive strategy with an edible, two-pound white-and-dark chocolate chess set from Schakolad

her desk, she gives rein to her rebel streak with her collection of socks and tights in all kinds of fantastic colors, prints, and designs. You'll find them at Adorn Me, on the second floor above the Bead Gallery on East Liberty. They're \$25-\$32, and styles include camouflage fishnets and black tights with brass grommets running up the sides.

You can wince at your offspring's piercings, or you could be the coolest parent in town by actually buying your age-appropriate kids a gift certificate from Pangea on East Liberty. A single earlobe piercing is \$20; the second is half-price at \$10 for a total of \$30. Other body part piercings

cost more. As for what to put in the piercing, simple rings start at \$15, the popular barbell starts at \$30, and nostril screws start at \$30.



(Above) kid-totable Little Reader foam chairs at Elephant Ears in Kerrytown. (Right) Bicycle built for four, at Midwest Bike and Tandem in the Courtyard Shops.

Chocolate Factory on East Washington. The \$60 set is regulation size. Other edible items include a \$32 chocolate shoe and a \$67 dark chocolate football that melts in your mouth, not in the huddle.

Start kids on the road to a committed organic lifestyle with baby eating utensils at Organic Bliss on East Liberty; made from corn-based "bioplastic" instead of petroleum-based standard plastic, the \$8 set comes in a cheerful and appropriate bright yellow. Cute organic cotton bibs are \$16 and are festooned with provocative phrases like "Panic, Chaos, Disorder," "My Work Here Is Done," and, my favorite, "Lunch Is on Me."

Perpetua on Fourth Ave. offers eco-friendly products as well, including surprisingly soft, elegant purses made from recycled plastic water bottles, \$37, men's wallets made from recycled bike inner tubes (they don't have to be inflated to 32 psi, so they won't ruin the line of a suit) starting at \$21, and organic fabric dresses that aren't hand painted, but *trunk* painted, by Asian elephants—no kidding. They start at \$299. Especially valuable if you can find one: a Dumbo original from his "blue period."

I have a friend who works in a conservative office. She dresses traditionally, but, hidden away behind the modesty panel on

Princess Designs Jewelry & Gifts, in Kerrytown, glows with what must be one of the largest selections of amber jewelry in town, ranging from tiny \$12 pendants to ornate brooches and rings starting at \$50. The thickness of the amber determines how much light gets through. One example, a \$225 depiction of the Mona Lisa, is luminously stunning.

Mudpuddles in Kerrytown has Magformers, extra-powerful magnetic geometric shapes that you lay out on a flat surface per the instructions, lift into the air, and watch as the magnets snap together to form a three-dimensional structure. Coolness. Sets start at \$20. Another splendid magnetic toy: Flip-n-Stack Acrobatz, tiny figures you launch off a springboard so that their hands and feet catch each other and allow them to perform feats of acrobatics that would put Cirque du Soleil to shame. A starter set of two is \$5.

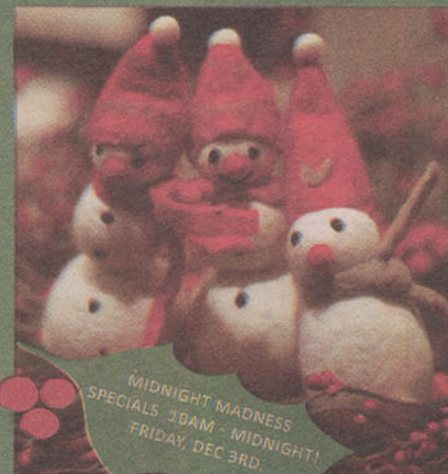
Few things are better than curling up in your favorite easy chair with a good book. Now your kids can, too. The \$70 Little Reader foam chair at Elephant Ears in Kerrytown is perfect for toddlers. Its low weight and carry handle mean kids can tote it around the house, but its wide-

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The Santa Conundrum

Our 2010 Holiday Gift Guide

based construction makes it stable and safe. For little readers who like a little musical ambiance, Elephant Ears carries a big selection of Putumayo Kids Presents, designed to introduce kids to music styles and cultures from around the world, \$16.

Some people have a sweet tooth; others, a salt tooth. For the latter, a striking and practical Himalayan pink salt plate from the Ann Arbor Spice Company



Salt pigs at Spice Merchants come with piggy ears; All About Blue's Michigan-themed trailer hitch cover doubles as a bottle opener.



in Kerrytown is the perfect gift. These two-inch slabs of salt rock carved from an ancient seabed in the Himalayas can be heated in the oven, then taken out and used for sautéing, grilling, curing, and baking. And don't worry about high blood pressure—salt blocks only add a hint of salt to whatever you cook. They start at \$20. For \$17, pick up a salt pig, a wide-mouthed, ceramic container for storing salt that makes it easy to grab a pinch or a spoonful while cooking. And unlike most salt pigs, this one actually looks like a pig.

How do you keep from crying when chopping onions? Some people say burn a candle. Others tell you to breathe through your mouth. I've even heard you should hold a lit match between your teeth—and good luck with that. Hollander's Kitchen & Home in Kerrytown has a solution that actually works without singeing your nostril hairs: onion goggles. A comfortable foam seal protects your eyes from irritating onion vapors, and they have anti-fog lenses. \$21.

For those shopping on a budget (and who isn't?), everything at the Orchid Lane Warehouse on East Liberty is \$15 or less. That includes cozy Sherpa blankets from Nepal in some distinctively non-Nepalese

patterns like argyle, plaid, and paisley, and tagua palm nut jewelry handcrafted by Ecuadorian artisans and nicknamed "elephant ivory" for its resemblance to the real thing.

Also on Liberty, Poshh specializes in small quantities of unusual designer wear, minimizing the chance that your giftee will walk into a party and spot someone else wearing a black, double-breasted capelet that looks like a combination waist-length pea coat/Inverness cloak with a built-in buttoned-down scarf; it's \$150. Poshh also carries La Mer watches, notable for the fact that the company was founded by U-M grad Martine Ilana in her dorm room in 2001. Now based in LA, La Mer markets watches with classic faces set off by beautiful Argentine leather wristbands.

Urban Outfitters on State has an intriguing selection of desk calendars starting at \$12. Try Calendar in a Can. Each month is a sheet four inches wide and thirty-six inches long, and the days are numbered top to bottom like a list. Or, for those working the Beer Pong circuit, give the Beer Pong Pro Pack calendar. From the self-proclaimed "ultimate authorities on all things Beer Pong" comes a new daily tip, trick, or Beer Pong factoid "to help you take your game to the next level." Dude!

If you know a dedicated Michigan tailgater with a removable trailer hitch, pick up a Michigan Wolverines Trailer Hitch Cover at All About Blue on State. It slides snugly inside a class III trailer hitch receiver (better check before you buy), and features a big blue block M over a yellow background with a hand-painted enamel finish and a functional built-in bottle opener. \$46. Cool retro Michigan mousepads are \$10, featuring reproductions of the covers of classic Michigan football programs from the early twentieth century on a pigskin background.

The well-dressed gentleman still wears French cuffs. And he likes his cuff links from Van Boven in the Nickels Arcade, where the selection includes the American flag, a block M, horseshoes, and the iconic image of Marines raising the American flag on Iwo Jima, all ranging from \$50-\$85. Van Boven also has a spiffy selection of belts in unusual animal skins starting at \$165, including alligator, ostrich, and crocodile.

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The Santa Conundrum

Our 2010 Holiday Gift Guide

As someone who took a bad fall last winter on a rugged trek to the end of my driveway to get the mail, I'm a fan of Yaktrax at Bivouac on State. Starting at \$20, these are high-tech, molded thermal plastic traction devices you attach to your shoes. The manufacturer says they give you "360 degrees of traction on ice and snow," and that they're good to minus 41 degrees Fahrenheit. All I know is that they keep me from doing a human wheelie during an ice storm. Bivouac also has plenty of other stuff for the intrepid adventurer, including an emergency iPod charger for \$29 and a USB computer light, \$10.

The Safe Sex Shop on South U is about more than health and hygiene. There are great gifts here for your partner, including bathing oil, flamboyant jeweled body decorations, and the Modern Kamasutra set, \$19, which in-

who brought you Wellies, there are fleece sock boot liners in fashionable stripes, \$35-\$40.

Turns out late-night TV isn't the only place to get Ginsu knives; Village Attic on South U has a set of 12 for \$34 that includes a pair of scissors. The store has lots of colorful, cheerful housewares and decor, including fun \$7 mugs with dry-erase games to help you pass the time while you linger over your morning coffee, like hangman or connect the dots. The special wipe-off marker you'll need to play is \$1.50.

Unless you're a hard-core football fan, you probably don't remember the Michigan Arrows. They belonged to the long-defunct Continental Football League, a pro football league that lasted from 1965 to 1969, played at the University of Detroit Stadium, and made so

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Mission Statement:
Flatsnoots comes to Ann Arbor to erect our portable arbor and to do some urban camping. To see old friends and to meet new friends. To enjoy ourselves and not to be boneheads, and perhaps to sell a few Christmas trees and wreaths.

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YCI Clothing on South
University has royally-approved Hunter boots. The gas-mask-like contraption is a portable hookah from nearby Smoka Hookah.

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cludes a set of 30 cards depicting photographs and detailed descriptions of each position from "The Climber" to "The Lotus." Who knows? You may be inspired to make up a few of your own.

The hookah—it's not just for smoky bars anymore. Enjoy your hookah any time, anywhere, with the \$50 Mitsuba portable hookah from Smoka Hookah on South U, a lightweight device that looks like a cross between a gas mask and a Zippo lighter and comes with a carrying strap and coal tongs. The package says it's ideal for smoking at the beach, the park, camping, or even in the car—presumably not while driving M-14.

Hunter Boots is the official supplier of waterproof footwear to Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, but you and your lowly commoner friends can also sport a pair for \$125 if you go to YCI Clothing on South U. The waterproof footwear comes in red, yellow, and black. Or, from the people

little money that the players had to wear hand-me-down uniforms from the Detroit Lions. Underground Printing on South U doesn't have the vintage uniforms, but they do have vintage-looking T-shirts emblazoned with the Michigan Arrows' old logo. Part of their commemorative T-shirt series honoring defunct pro sports teams, they're \$25.

Dr. Who fans will love a disappearing Tardis mug from Middle Earth, also on South U. The Tardis (Time And Relative Dimensions In Space) is a time machine that looks deceptively like an old-fashioned London police call box. Pour in the hot beverage of your choice, and watch the Tardis slowly disappear (you provide the cheesy yet endearing *rooov, rooov* sound effect from the TV show). Other mugs with disappearing pictures include Adam and Eve (if you're thinking fig leaves, you're right) and "Jesus Shaves," which you can probably

figure out for yourself.

Sharpen your pet's problem-solving skills with the Dog Treat Fighter interactive dog toy from Green Pawz, \$62. It's a "level 3" interactive wooden puzzle that theoretically trains your dog to learn how to slide pegs along channels to reveal a treat. Or if you'd just rather skip the brain teaser and feed Fido, the Maple Village store sells organic pet treats made from free-range poultry, organic cheese and vegetables, and meat, eggs, and dairy products from hormone- and antibiotic-free animals. Some of the flavors sound pretty tempting, including honey barbecue chicken and Brooklyn pizza.

Former Michigan Supreme Court Justice, best-selling author of *Anatomy of*

Nicola's Books has some neat stocking stuffers, including Shakespearean Insult Gum. Example: "Thy breath stinks with eating toasted cheese."

a *Murder* (under his pseudonym Robert Traver), and devout fly fisherman John Voelker once wrote, in an essay on why he liked to fish, that "bourbon out of an old tin cup always tastes better out there." If the fly-fisherman on your list doesn't have said tin cup, get him the black, stainless steel eight-ounce hip flask with a black, rubberized cover from Simms, a leading maker of fine fishing gear and accessories. It's \$25 at Colton Bay Outfitters on Jackson. Fishing lures start at \$1 and make great stocking stuffers. Some have pretty odd names—who wouldn't be tempted by an "Articulated Monkey Butt"?

Lovers of fine cigars will appreciate a sampler from La Casa de la Habana on Jackson. Packs include four to six Dominican, Nicaraguan, and Honduran cigars, and cost \$40 and up.

Nicola's Books in Westgate is a great place to find books, calendars, cards, and more (and a cozy gas fireplace to read them by), but some of the neatest finds are the stocking stuffers by the cash registers. Like Shakespearean Insult Gum at \$3 for a seven-pack: each stick is labeled with the name of a Shakespeare play and reveals a Bard-written insult. Example: "Thy breath stinks with eating toasted cheese."

The Dickens Village, the Alpine Village, the North Pole Village... those miniature ceramic buildings are great gifts for avid collectors. Happy House Gifts in Westgate has a lot of them, but what really intrigued me was their Christmas in the City collection. Featuring an art deco bus depot for \$75, the Art Institute of Chicago for \$85, and the Ed Sullivan Theater—minus David Letterman's name on the marquee—for \$70.

Teaching your kid how to fly a new remote-controlled airplane when you've never done it before can be an exercise

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7 pm Family Service
9 pm Communion Service
11 pm Candlelight Service
\$2 parking at Liberty Sq. Garage
before 7:00 pm; free after 7:00 pm
Green Wood Christmas Eve Services
5 pm Candlelight Family Service
9 pm Candlelight Service

Downtown: 120 S. State St. at Huron
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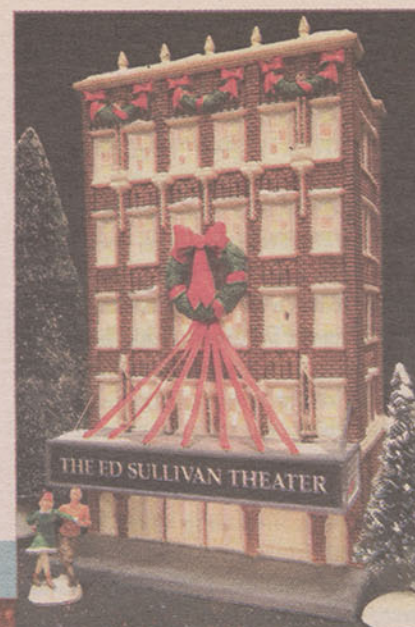
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The Santa Conundrum

Our 2010 Holiday Gift Guide

in frustration, embarrassment, and instant demolition. But the Super Cub RC plane at Riders Hobby Shop on Carpenter, \$180, boasts anti-crash technology. So how bad, really, could things get? Also popular: Hex Bugs. Roughly the size of your thumb, they look like the kind of mechanical bugs that crawl by the thousands out of the woodwork and swarm all over some unfortunate victim in sci-fi movies. The bugs react to sounds and scurry one way or the other if you clap your hands or they hit an object. \$10.

If you know someone who doesn't need a cup of coffee to



(From top) Miniature Ed Sullivan Theater at Happy House in Westgate; Deer Bread in a Bottle at Dixboro General Store; and I Am Not a Paper Cup—a reusable ceramic go-cup with a silicone (not plastic) lid—from Crown House of Gifts in Traver Village.

niture on Washtenaw. It's a little guiding wheel that attaches to the shaft of the pool cue and rolls toward the cue ball when you make your stroke. It helps younger players learn to keep the cue tip on the path toward the cue ball. \$10.

In 2006, the Nintendo Wii game controller freed mankind from the sofa and allowed people to physically interact with their video games for the first time. This year, the Microsoft Kinect freed mankind from game controllers themselves. As the ad copy puts it, *you* are the game controller. Kinect uses sensors to recognize your face, listen to your voice, and capture your movements. Swing your arms like you're swinging a bat, and (if you're lucky) you'll connect with the virtual ball on the screen. It works with the Xbox 360. \$150 at GameStop next to Barnes & Noble on Washtenaw.

The Dixboro General Store in Dixboro on Plymouth Road has great old-fashioned Christmas tree ornaments starting at \$5, along with some a little less traditional—like hockey pucks, dog bones, and, for the backyard griller on your list, a gas barbecue grill. And if you

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know someone who likes beer, bread, and do-it-yourself projects, Beer Bread in a Bottle covers all three. For \$7, you get a big beer bottle containing all the ingredients for making traditional beer bread—just add your own beer. Which may mean picking up a bottle of someone's favorite brew to go along with it.

The \$70 Plasma car at Tree Town Toys in Traver Village is definitely one of the coolest toys around. It looks like a tri-cycle, but it doesn't have pedals or gears. The Plasma car harnesses the natural forces of inertia, centrifugal force, gravity, and friction. Kids just have to jump on and, well, basically, squirm in order to roll it all over the place. And here's a secret: it supports up to 220 pounds, so adults can ride it too. But better not let the adults know, or the kids'll never get near it.

For runners anxious to hit the road, help them eliminate the time it takes to lace up their shoes with Yankz. It's a lacing system using expandable cords you lace through the eyelets of your running shoes, letting you adjust the fit and then just pull a toggle to tighten the laces perfectly every time. It's \$10 at Tortoise & Hare in Traver Village. And not being a runner myself, I had no idea that men who are risk painful nipple chafing (not generally a problem for women because most wear bras when they run). Nip Guards can help. Disposable covers that adhere to your nipples to protect them, they're \$10 for a pack of ten pairs.

The I Am Not a Paper Cup thermal porcelain cup at Crown House of Gifts in Traver Village is one of the neatest gifts I found this year. It looks just like a regular white paper cup you'd get if you ordered a large coffee to go, but it's actually a thermal porcelain cup that keeps drinks hot and fits neatly in your car's cup holder. It even comes with a silicone I Am Not a Plastic Lid lid that says "Caution, contents hot." Just remove it before you take your car to be detailed, or it's likely to get pitched along with any other trash you've left lying around. It's \$20.

More families are discovering the togetherness fostered by bicycling together ... especially if they're riding tandems. That's because on a tandem, Dad can't ride ahead. Midwest Bike & Tandem on Plymouth Road in the Courtyard Shops sells tandems that range from two seats to four, and they can special-order bikes that seat even more. They don't come cheap—two-seaters start at \$1,500, but most people who buy them say the sense of togetherness it gives them is worth every penny.

Checking around town, I found a lot of great gift ideas this year. Unfortunately, so did my son, and his list is long. I warned him we were on a budget, but he just smiled inscrutably and said he'll ask Santa for the expensive stuff. So he's got me boxed in: do I call his bluff? Or do I pony up on the chance he still believes?

Oh, who am I kidding? He knows I won't let Santa take the fall. ■



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Sponsor a shelter animal and give our homeless pets a "Home for the Holidays"

The Humane Society of Huron Valley (HSHV) takes in an average of 17 homeless pets each day. The bad economy has created a crisis - pets are being turned in because their owners are losing jobs and homes, or they simply can't afford to keep them.



Bear is a 4 year old Newfoundland mix whose owner lost her job and could not care for her companion any longer. Unfortunately, this story is far too common these days. Bear is house-trained, knows many commands and loves to be around people. Even if you can't adopt Bear, you can help him by sponsoring him until he finds a new home.

🐾 Sponsor an animal for as little as \$20 - the perfect holiday gift for that special animal lover in your life!

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December Events

We want to know about your event!

Please send a press release (no phone calls, please).

- **By mail:** John Hinchey, Calendar Editor, Ann Arbor Observer, 201 Catherine, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
- **By fax:** 769-3375
- **By email:** hinch@aaobserver.com
- **After-hours drop box:** right side of the Observer's front door facing Catherine

What gets in?

We give priority to Ann Arbor events. Always include a contact person's telephone number. Please try to submit materials as early as possible; items submitted after the deadline (the tenth day of the preceding month) might not get in.

Next month's deadline:

All appropriate materials received by the tenth day of the month for the upcoming month will be used as space permits; materials submitted later might not get in (but will be added to arborweb).

arborweb:

An expanded, continually updated version of this calendar is available at arborweb.com. This calendar is updated daily. If you have an event not listed in the print calendar, or want to update a listed event, please send it and we'll post it on arborweb.

WARNING!

To save space, many recurrent events are noted only the first time they occur. This includes many weekly and biweekly events. To find a full list of events for the last Wednesday in the month, for example, readers should also check earlier Wednesday listings, especially the first Wednesday.

www.arborweb.com

1 WEDNESDAY

★**Winter Democratic Rides: Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society.** Daily. The assembled riders choose their own pace, distance, and destination. Note: Riders should be prepared to take care of themselves on all AABTS rides. Carry a water bottle, a spare tire or tube, a pump, change for a phone call, and snacks. 10 a.m. (daily) & 1 p.m. (Sat. & Sun. only), meet at Wheeler Park, N. Fourth Ave. at Depot St. Free. 545-0541 (morning ride), 994-5908 (afternoon ride).

★**Storytime: Waters Place Borders.** Every Wed. & Fri. Borders staff read books for infants, babies, and toddlers. 10 a.m., Borders, 3140 Lohr Rd. Free. 997-8884.

★**Preschool Storytimes: Ann Arbor District Library.** Every Tues. & Wed. through Dec. 15. Stories and songs for kids age 2 & up (accompanied by an adult). Note: These storytimes are also offered (through the week of Dec. 13) at the Malletts Creek (Wed., 10-10:30 a.m.), Traverwood (Tues. 11-11:30 a.m., Wed. 6-6:30 p.m., & Thurs. 10-10:30 a.m.), and Pittsfield (Thurs. 7-7:30 p.m., & Fri. 10-10:30 a.m.) branches. 11-11:30 a.m. (Wed.) & 10-10:30 a.m. (Tues.), AADL youth department story room, 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-8301 (main library), 327-4200 (branches).

★**Storytime: Arborland Borders.** Every Wed. & Fri. A Borders staffer reads stories and leads a craft project for toddlers. Also, sing-alongs. 11 a.m., Borders, 3527 Washtenaw. Free. 677-6948.

★**Chime Concert: Kerrytown Shops.** Every Wed., Fri., & Sat. except Dec. 24 & 25. All invited to play one of 100 songs, with melodies transcribed in numbers, on the 17-bell chime's numbered keys. Ambitious players can add chords. Local chimemaster Heather O'Neal demonstrates. Noon-12:30 p.m. (Wed. & Fri.) & 10:30-11 a.m. (Sat.), Kerrytown. Free. 369-3107.

★**"Chanukah Wonderland": Chabad House.** Nov. 29-Dec. 6. All kids and adults invited for Chanukah activities, including arts & crafts, candle making, tours of the Chanukah House, olive press demos, and chances to dress up as Judah Maccabee, build a Lego menorah, and make and eat potato latkes and sufganiyot. Also, menorah lighting each evening at 5:30 p.m. and a sale of Chanukah items and food.



TOM STEPPE

Eli Tell, Ian Bejster, and Talia Akiva star in the Ann Arbor Civic Theatre's production of *To Kill a Mockingbird* December 2-5.

FILMS

50 Film Screenings

John Hinchey & Katie Whitney

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An evening of British music

James Leonard

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70 Nightspots

Lac La Belle

John Hinchey
James M. Manheim

Noon-7 p.m., Briarwood Sears wing. \$3 admission. 994-9832, (914) 588-9860.

★**Brown Bag Organ Series: U-M School of Music.** Local organists TBA perform a program of "Music of the Season." Bring a bag lunch. 12:15 p.m., U-M School of Public Health Community Room, 109 S. Observatory. Free. 764-0594.

★**ACBL Duplicate Bridge: Ann Arbor Senior Center.** Every Mon., Wed., & Thurs. All seniors age 50 & over invited to play ACBL-sanctioned duplicate bridge. Bring a partner. 12:45-4 p.m. (Mon. & Wed.), noon-3 p.m. (Thurs.), & 7-10:30 p.m. (Mon.), Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin. \$7 (members, \$6). 794-6250.

★**Chess: U-M Turner Senior Resource Center.** Every Wed. through Dec. 22. All seniors invited to play chess. Refreshments. 1-4 p.m., Turner, 2401 Plymouth Rd. Free. 998-9353.

★**"Hanukkah Celebration with Jewish Family Services": University Living Cultural Center.** With live music and latkes. All invited. 2-3 p.m., University Living, 2865 S. Main. Free. Reservations required. 669-3030, ext. 233.

★**"Memory and Religious Culture: Greek Orthodox Life in Ottoman Cappadocia": U-M Modern Greek Program 2nd Annual Demetrios and Demetra Partalis Kales Lecture.** Lecture by Richard Stockton College of New Jersey historical studies professor Tom Papademetriou. 4 p.m., Michigan League Vandenberg Room. Free. 936-6099.

★**"And the Band Played On": World AIDS Week.** Screening of Roger Spottiswoode's 1993 adaptation of Randy Shilts's best-selling novel about the early years of the AIDS epidemic. Full schedule of World AIDS Week events at umich.edu/~aids. 4 p.m., 1690 SPH 11415 Washington Hts. Free. 363-8068.

★**Scrabble: Ann Arbor Scrabblers.** Every Wed. All invited to play this popular word game. Bring a set if you have one. 5-8 p.m., Arbor Brewing, 114 E. Washington. Free. 994-0084.

★**"Being in Pictures: A Conversation with Joanne Leonard and Sidonie Smith": U-M Authors Forum Series.** U-M art & design professor Leonard and U-M women's studies and English professor Smith discuss *Being in Pictures*, Leonard's memoir that uses both artwork and writing to explore her personal experiences as a feminist artist, academic, single mom, identical twin, and daughter of an Alzheimer's patient. Signing. 5:30-7 p.m., 100 Hatcher Graduate Library, enter from the Diag. Free. 615-5783.

★**Magic: The Gathering Tournament: Get Your Game On.** Every Tues.-Fri. & Sun. All invited to compete in tournaments of this popular collectible card game using standard constructed (Sun. & Thurs.), Elder Dragon Highlander (Tues.), Legacy (Wed.), and booster draft (Fri.) decks. Prizes. Bring your own cards (except Fri.). 6 p.m. (Tues.-Fri.) & 1 p.m. (Sun.), *Get Your Game On*, 709 Packard. \$5 (Tues., free; Fri., \$15 includes cards). 786-3746.

★**U-M Women's Basketball vs. Wake Forest.** The U-M also has games this month against Kansas (Dec. 9), New Mexico State (Dec. 13), Detroit (Dec. 18), Boston College (Dec. 22), and Ohio State (Dec. 30). 6:30 p.m. (Dec. 1 & 30) & 7 p.m. (Dec. 9, 13, 18, & 22), Crisler Arena. \$3 (youths under age 18, \$1; U-M students with ID, free). 764-0247.

★**"Makers Meet": Blue House Ann Arbor.** Dec. 1, 8, & 15. All invited to work on crafts projects with others. Bring your own project and supplies. 6:30-8:30 p.m., Blue House, 1026 S. Main. \$5 donation. 780-1762.

★**Ann Arbor Bridge Club.** Every Wed. All invited to play ACBL-sanctioned duplicate bridge. If you plan to come without a partner, call in advance or arrive 20 minutes early. 7-11 p.m., Walden Hills clubhouse, 2114 Pauline west of Maple. (Park in the designated spaces in the lot on the north side of Pauline.) \$6 per person. 623-8050.

★**"The Best of 2010": Zingerman's Delicatessen.** Zingerman's cofounder Ari Weinzweig discusses and offers taste samples of some of Zingerman's most notable products, including perennial favorites, obscure oddities, new foods, and old ones that hit it big this year. 7-9 p.m., Zingerman's Next Door (upstairs), 422 Detroit St. \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door. Space limited; reservations required. 663-3354.

★**ESL Conversation Group: Ann Arbor District Library.** Every Mon., Wed., & Fri. (except Dec. 20) through Dec. 22. All levels of English speakers invited for conversation. 7-8:30 p.m., AADL Traverwood Branch (Wed.), 3333 Traverwood at Huron Pkwy; 1-2:30 p.m., AADL Malletts Creek Branch (Fri.), 3090 E. Eisenhower between Stone School

& Packard; & 1-2:30 p.m., AADL Pittsfield Branch (Mon.), 2359 Oak Valley Dr. between Scio Church Rd. and Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Free. 327-4200.

★“Everything You Wanted to Know about Getting the Best From Digital Photography”: Nicola’s Books. Talk by Dexter photographer Dave Berger. 7 p.m., Nicola’s, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. Reservations requested. 662-0600.

★“Straight Talk about Sending Your Kid to College”: Ann Arbor District Library. Community High School college counselors John Boshoven and Diane Grant lead a discussion with a panel of local parents, including career counselor Lisa Mangian, financial planner Barbara Tucker, and teachers Alex Wagner and Lucy Gauvin. 7-8:45 p.m., AADL Pittsfield Branch, 2359 Oak Valley Dr. between Scio Church Rd. and Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Free. 327-4555.

★“MC5 Sonically Speaking: A Tale of Revolution and Rock ‘n’ Roll”: Ann Arbor District Library. Detroit-based music journalist Brett Callwood discusses his book about the MC5, the pioneering late-60s Detroit proto-punk band. Signing. 7-8:30 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

★Opera Workshop: U-M School of Music. Dec. 1 & 3. Today: U-M opera grad students perform arias and Shakespeare monologues. 7 p.m., U-M Music School McIntosh Theater, 1100 Baitz Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

★Visitors Night: Ann Arbor Model Railroad Club. All invited to check out the trains whizzing around on the club’s big, elaborate layout, housed in a depot restored by the club. 7:30-10 p.m., Michigan Central depot, 3487 Broad, Dexter. Free. 426-5100.

★History of Books & Printing Reading Group: Motte & Bailey, Booksellers. All invited to join a discussion of *The Fourth Part of the World*, Toby Lester’s history of the 16th-century German map that was the first to include the Americas. Refreshments. 7:30-9 p.m., Motte & Bailey, 212 N. Fourth Ave. Free. 669-0451.

★“Best of Friends”: Purple Rose Theatre Company. Every Wed.-Sun., Oct. 14-Dec. 18, and Dec. 14. World premiere of Jeff Daniels’ new comedy about 2 married couples who navigate the minefield of their friendship until it blows up in their faces. 3 & 8 p.m., Purple Rose, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Tickets \$25 (Sun. eves., Wed. & Thurs., and Nov. 23), \$35 (weekend matinees & Fri.), \$40 (Sat. eves.) in advance at purplerosetheatre.org and by phone. 433-7673.

★“Comedy Jamm”: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Every Wed. except Dec. 15. Performances by up to 12 aspiring area stand-up comics. Alcohol is served. 8 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant). \$5 in advance and at the door. 996-9080.

★Wednesdays @ Michigan Union: Swing Ann Arbor. Dec. 1, 8, & 15. Swing dancing to prerecorded music. No partner needed. Bring casual or nicer shoes that stay on your feet when you’re active. Preceded by intermediate swing (7 p.m.) and beginning swing (8 p.m.) lessons. 9-11 p.m., Michigan Union Pendleton Room. \$5 (students, \$4). 945-8428

2 THURSDAY

★Social Mah-Jongg: Ann Arbor Senior Center. Every Mon. & Thurs. All seniors age 55 & over invited to play. 10 a.m. (Thurs.) & 1 p.m. (Mon.), Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin. Free. 794-6250.

★Thursday Lunch Bunch: Jewish Community Center. Every Thurs. A weekly program of activities primarily for seniors. The program begins at 10 a.m. with “Energy Exercise” (\$4), a 60-minute exercise program led by Maria Farquhar. At 11 a.m. Current Events discussion group led by Heather Dombey is followed at noon by a homemade dairy lunch (\$3 with reservation, \$4 without reservation and for non-seniors) and at 1 p.m. by a cultural or educational program. Dec. 2: A Social Security representative discusses “Social Security and Medicare.” Q&A. Dec. 9: U-M Women’s Heart Program nurse practitioner Cheryl Bord discusses “The Hips and Lows of Hypertension.” Dec. 16: screening of *Yoo Hoo, Mrs. Goldberg*, Aviva Kempner’s documentary about Gertrude Berg, the creator and star of the first character-driven TV sitcom, *The Goldbergs*. Dec. 23: a discussion with a local rabbi TBA. Dec. 30: New Year’s Eve celebration with entertainment by a local musician TBA. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr. (off Stone School Rd. south of Packard). Free. 971-0990.

★U-M Frankel Center for Judaic Studies Lecture Series. Dec. 2 & 9. Lectures by visiting scholars on “Hebrew in the Crucible: Multilingual Voices in Israel Zangwill’s *The Melting Pot*” (Dec. 2) & “Judezmo/Haketia (Ladino): A Language of Jewish Emotional Expression” (Dec. 9). Noon, U-M Alumni Center Rooms A & B, 200 Fletcher. Free. 763-9047.

★U-M Center for Japanese Studies Noon Lecture Series. Dec. 2 & 9. Lectures by U-M and visiting

Best of Friends

Jeff Daniels wrights again

Curious thing about the word “playwright”—it has nothing to do with writing. “Wright” is a word from the manufacturing arts (wheelwright, shipwright), not the arty arts, and Jeff Daniels is a skilled manufacturer of stage plays, punching out about one a year, kind of like Charles Dickens did novels, or Woody Allen does movies. Like that of Allen and many wrights before him, Daniels’ work is always competent, solid, and comfortable in its ability to offer up well-crafted entertainment, rather than envelope-pushing art.

In *Best of Friends*, Daniels puts two outwardly secure, civilized couples in a tasteful, well-appointed living room, then turns their mundane social evening into the upper-middle-class equivalent of a cage fight. It proved a golden formula for *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *God of Carnage* (the Yasmina Reza play in which Jeff Daniels performed on Broadway). Daniels has frankly identified *God of Carnage* as the inspiration for *Best of Friends*, and he seems to tip his hat even more to *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* As in *Woolf*, the two couples in *Best of Friends* aren’t evenly matched: Beth (Michelle Muntain) and John (Alex Leydenfrost) are older, wealthier, and predatory. Beth is booze-addled, and (as Beth’s taunts point out) John is sterile, and possibly impotent. The younger couple, Ken and Hannah (Matthew David and Rhiannon Ragland), like Albee’s younger couple, initially seem wholly opposite to Beth and John—but the action quickly departs from that of Daniels’ two inspirations and takes off on its own.

Daniels doesn’t expressly say the two couples live in a gated golf community, but it’s easy to imagine they do. It seems John and Ken met on a golf course and became friends not so much because they liked each other, but because they didn’t dislike each other. These men, with their diffident, unexamined, undeveloped inner lives can’t see much beyond their

mandate to bring home as much money as possible. Meanwhile, their wives are all about inner life—with no children and no jobs, they have nothing to do but develop their personalities. Beth has clearly come to love her own sour, loony company so much that she doesn’t notice what a startling image she sometimes projects. Hannah, obsessed with the budding friendship, sees intricately coded social messages in what is more likely careless apathy.

Mountain is marvelous as the catalyst of social insanity she always seems to neatly



DANNA SEGREST, COURTESY PRIC

sidestep. David is equally fascinating, his Ken stolidly blind and deaf to any voice—internal or external—that might make sense of the world. Ragland and Leydenfrost are a little less compelling. Almost as if the actors had taken on the worst excesses of their characters, Ragland at times seems to overshoot her part, and Leydenfrost sometimes barely registers as a presence at all.

As a playwright Daniels is best known for his *Escanaba* series of Michigan gothic tall tales, but I like him when he tackles contemporary drama. Sometimes you can almost see him sweating to produce recognizable but complex characters. To do that he uses some postmodern devices, like breaking through the “fourth wall” at the front of the stage, and spinning time backwards. Not everything works, but there’s no doubt that Daniels does. If you’re looking for an evening’s entertainment between now and December 18, when *Best of Friends* closes, the play is a strong bet.

—Sally Mitani

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

University of Michigan Library

MLibrary

IN THE HATCHER LIBRARY GALLERY

913 S. University Avenue

Wed, December 1

5:30-7:00 pm

Being in Pictures: A conversation with photo memoir author Joanne Leonard and Sidonie Smith, U-M Professor of Women’s Studies and English

Thurs, December 2

7:00-8:30 pm

Ted Rall, controversial political cartoonist and author of *The Anti-American Manifesto* calls for radical change

Tues, December 7

7:00-8:30 pm

Blaine Pardoe, author of *Lost Eagles: One Man’s Mission to Find Missing Airmen in Two World Wars*, about the man who created the way we still look for airmen downed in combat behind enemy lines

MAP LIBRARY, 8TH FLOOR HATCHER GRAD

913 S. University Avenue

Thurs, December 16

4:00-7:00 pm

Third Thursday at the Map Library, Open House

This month’s theme: *Highlights from the Collection*

Parking for events at Hatcher Graduate Library is available at 650 S. Forest (public parking structure)

DUDERSTADT CENTER, NORTH CAMPUS

2281 Bonisteel Blvd
Video Studio

Fri, Sat, December 3 and 4
8:00 pm

By the Way: Music in Pluralism

School of Music, Theatre & Dance students present an evening drama of music, dance and motion picture

Parking is available in surface lots on Murfin Ave and Fuller Rd. Street parking on Bonisteel

All events are **free and open to the public**. For more information about these events, and to see a complete listing of events, go to:

www.lib.umich.edu/events



December 2010 Event Highlights Ann Arbor District Library

Events will take place in the Downtown Library Multi-Purpose Room, unless otherwise noted.



Brett Callwood



Mark Rojek



Classical Bells



December 5



Linocut Printing



GOING BLIND



Alberta Adams

- Wednesday 1 7:00 - 8:45 pm** **Straight Talk About Sending Your Kid to College**
Community High's college counselors **John Boshoven** and **Diane Grant** lead a discussion of parents who have successfully navigated the minefield of college planning • **PITTSFIELD BRANCH**
- Wednesday 1 7:00 - 8:30 pm** **Author & Booksigning • Brett Callwood Discusses His Book MC5: Sonically Speaking: A Tale of Revolution and Rock 'n' Roll** • This Detroit-based author's book delves into the story of how the band MC5 paved the way for punk rock
- Thursday 2 7:00 - 8:30 pm** **Acupuncture: A Brief History & Practical Class In Home Treatments with Mark Rojek**, acupuncturist and enzyme therapist
- Saturday 4 1:00 - 2:00 pm** **Classical Bells Concert** • Michigan's premier handbell ensemble returns to AADL for this annual holiday concert
- Saturday 4 1:00 - 3:00 pm** **Comic In A Box: Make An Accordion Mini-Comic**
Cartoonists **Anne** and **Jerzy Drozd** show you how to make a "done in one" improvisational short comics story – and a box to put it in • **GRADE 6 - ADULT • MALLETT'S CREEK BRANCH**
- Sunday 5 1:00 - 3:00 pm** **Comic Artists Forum with Star Wars Artist Katie Cook**
Guest artist **Katie Cook** gives art and publishing tips. Bring your drawing tools and drop in • **GRADE 6 - ADULT**
- Monday 6 4:30 - 7:30 pm** **UMS Book Discussion for Teachers • Free Play: Improvisation In Life and Art** • Led by author **Stephen Nachmanovitch**, this UMS Reading Culture Book Club for educators expands upon ideas within the UMS season of events • **REGISTRATION REQUIRED: CALL UMS AT 734.615.0122 OR EMAIL UMSYOUTH@UMICH.EDU**
- Tuesday 7 7:00 - 8:30 pm** **Herb David Guitar Studio Musician Showcase** • Enjoy the music of five musicians of different styles, all teachers at the Studio
- Wednesday 8 6:30 - 8:30 pm** **Linocut Printing Workshop** • Learn how to design, cut, and make your own linocut print using soft linoleum blocks. Supplies provided! • **GRADE 6 - ADULT • PITTSFIELD BRANCH**
- Wednesday 8 7:00 - 8:30 pm** **Sensors And The Self: Better Living Through Personal Informatics • Erik Hofer**, UM School of Information research computer specialist, explains how personal informatics can help you gain self-knowledge about your behavior and habits
- Tuesday 14 7:00 - 8:30 pm** **Film • Going Blind: Coming Out of the Dark About Vision Loss** • Director **Joe Lovett's** film is a look at each aspect of vision loss – preventing, treating and coping – as he interweaves his own story of vision loss with the compelling stories of others
- Thursday 16 7:00 - 8:00 pm** **Blues & Jazz Concert • Alberta Adams & The RJ Spangler Trio**
The undisputed Queen of the Blues in Detroit is joined by **Duncan McMillan**, **Ralph Tope**, and **RJ Spangler**
- Saturday 18 12:00 - 4:00 pm** **Saturday Smash Championship Round** • If you didn't win a spot this season, try the wildcard bracket! • **GRADE 6 - ADULT**
- Tuesday 21 6:00 - 8:00 pm** **Introduction to 3D Modeling with Blender** • Join **Matt Oishi** of the Neutral Zone for an intro to making 3D models, including hands-on time with the tool and optional lab practice time • **GRADE 6 - ADULT • DOWNTOWN 3RD FLOOR COMPUTER LAB**
- Tuesday 28 2:00 - 3:00 pm** **Happy New Year Crafts!** • We'll have all the supplies for you to make silly hats and noisemakers for your New Year's celebration! • **PRESCHOOL - GRADE 5 • TRAVERWOOD BRANCH**

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theme semester. 5:10 p.m., Michigan Theater. Free. 647-2337.

★**Board Game Night: Get Your Game On.** Every Tues. & Thurs. All invited to bring a game to play or try one of the store's. 6 p.m., Get Your Game On, 709 Packard. Free. 786-3746.

ACBL Bridge: Ann Arbor City Club. Every Thurs. All invited to play ACBL-sanctioned duplicate bridge. No partner required. 7 p.m., Ann Arbor City Club, 1830 Washtenaw. \$5. 761-6691.

Euchre Night: Out Loud Chorus Fund-Raiser. All invited to compete in a euchre tournament. 7 p.m., CUBS' AC in Colonial Lanes, 1950 South Industrial. \$10. 973-6084, 663-0036.

★**Annual Show-and-Tell: Huron Hills Lapidary & Mineral Society.** Club members show their mineral specimens. 7 p.m., West Side United Methodist Church, 900 S. Seventh St. Free. 655-5574.

★**Ann Arbor Go Club.** Every Sun. & Thurs. Players of all skill levels invited to play what's regarded as the world's most difficult board game. No partner necessary. Boards and stones provided. 7 p.m.-midnight (Thurs.) & 1-6 p.m. (Sun.), Espresso Royale, 322 S. State. Free. 417-5547.

★**"Acupuncture: A Brief History and Practical Class in Home Treatments":** Ann Arbor District Library. Talk by local acupuncturist and enzyme therapist **Mark Rojek**. 7-8:30 p.m., AADL multi-purpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

★**"The Anti-American Manifesto":** U-M Library. Controversial award-winning political cartoonist **Ted Rall** discusses his new book that calls for a revolution to avert the impending economic and political collapse he foresees for America. Signing. 7-8:30 p.m., 100 U-M Hatcher Graduate Library, enter from the Diag. Free. 615-5783.

★**"Dead Man Walking: The Journey Continues":** St. Mary Student Parish. Lecture by anti-death penalty activist **Sister Helen Prejean**, author of *Dead Man Walking*, her account of her visits with a convicted murderer sentenced to death. The book was the inspiration for the 1996 drama starring Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn. Part of the U-M LS&A "What Makes Life Worth Living?" theme semester. 7 p.m., U-M Business School Blau Auditorium, 701 Tappan. Free. 663-0557, ext. 240.

★**"Dorothy":** U-M Basement Arts. Dec. 2-4. **Porscha Kazmierczak** directs students in *Graham Reid's* drama about a woman who can't seem to take control of her internal world, but obscene and evil external forces offer her a choice between renewed hope and utter devastation. 7 p.m., U-M Walgreen Drama Center Studio 1, 1226 Murfin, North Campus. Free. basement.studentorgs.umich.edu.

★**"How the Grinch Stole Christmas":** Saline Area Players. Dec. 2-5. **Kara Cardella** directs local actors in her adaptation of Dr. Seuss's classic tale. This version includes a clever rendition of "The Night Before Christmas" and cameo appearances by the Cat in the Hat, Horton, and other favorite Dr. Seuss characters. 7 p.m., Stone Arch Arts & Events Center, 117 S. Ann Arbor St., Saline. Tickets \$5 (families, \$25). 355-8898.

Thursday Contra Dance: Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. Dec. 2, 9, 16, & 23. Dancing to live music. No partner needed; beginners welcome. Bring flat, nonmarking shoes. 7-10 p.m., 4531 Concourse Dr. (off S. State across from the airport). \$7 (students, \$4; kids age 13 & under with a parent, free). 408-1018.

Ann Arbor Ski Club. Dec. 2 & 16. All age 21 & older invited to learn about the club's downhill and cross-country ski and snowboarding outings and other social activities. Followed by a "Ski Fashion & Gadget Show" (Dec. 2) and a Christmas party (Dec. 16). Refreshments. 7:30-11 p.m., Cobblestone Farm barn, 2781 Packard. \$5 (Dec. 2); bring an unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots (Dec. 16). 786-2237.

Israeli Dancing: Jewish Community Center. Every Thurs. Dance instructor **Cheryl Felt** and DJ **Amnon Steiner** lead a variety of Israeli dances to recorded music. Easy dances and oldies the first hour followed by intermediate dances and requests. Beginners welcome. New dances taught each week. 7:30-10 p.m., JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr. (off Stone School Rd. south of Packard). \$5 (students, free). 971-0990.

★**Annual Winter Sing: Pioneer High School.** Steven Lorenz leads all 11 of the school's vocal groups in an eclectic program of traditional and contemporary choral music, including spirituals and South African folk songs as well as works by Bach, Biehl, Clausen, DiLasso, Mendelssohn, and Whitacre. 7:30 p.m., Pioneer High School Schreiber Auditorium, 601 W. Stadium at S. Main. Free. 994-2120.

★**Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Lab Ensemble: U-M School of Music.** **Ellen Rowe** and **Dennis Wilson** direct these music student ensembles and U-M jazz trumpet professors **Ingrid Jensen** and **Bill Lucas** in works by Bill Holman, Christine Jensen, Mike Ho-

stringband music

The Carolina Chocolate Drops

Reclamation techniques

The Carolina Chocolate Drops, young African American musicians from North Carolina, renew a fairly arcane tradition, the old-time black stringband music of the Carolina Piedmont that they learned from its handful of surviving octogenarian performers. They started out playing dances and clubs like the Ark, and in the booklet for their latest album, in time-honored fashion among old-time musicians, they explain how they came to learn each song. It's pretty folksy stuff, with banjo, fiddle, maybe an Autoharp. But now, on December 3, they're appearing at 3,600-seat Hill Auditorium, under the auspices of the prestigious University Musical Society. You almost have to ask, what's going on here?

Basically, the Drops have touched the third rail of American music—race—and found a way to lessen the shock. The sound of the stringbands, black and white, was rooted in the pervasive racist institution of nineteenth-century American music and culture, the blackface minstrel show. It can also, with clacking bones and other snappy syncopated percussion, be a hell of a lot of fun, and the Carolina Chocolate Drops offer a way to enjoy it. They say that they want to reclaim the African American contribution to the music, which started when banjo-like instruments were brought from Africa.

"It's complicated," multi-instrumentalist Dom Flemons told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Back in the day, there were black minstrels being imitated by white minstrels masquerading in blackface. And all making fun of every ethnic group. While the minstrel show became an international phenomenon, it gets looked at in a very negative way—which, to a large degree, it should be. There was a lot of shucking and jiving. But at the same time, there's a solid musical and

cultural piece of the puzzle that's been left behind, because we put all of it in a box during the civil-rights era, tried to hide it, and said, 'We can't do this thing.'"

It could be heavy stuff, and the titles of the Drops' albums, *Genuine Negro Jig* and before that *Colored Aristocracy*, allude to (and reclaim) a painful past. But the group made a key decision that helps them pick out the positive strands in the music: they have broadened the focus beyond the stringband repertory to include other traditions of the early twentieth-century South, among them blues, jug band and kazoo music, ragtime, and early jazz. Sometimes they play contemporary songs stringband-style, or



vocalist Rhiannon Giddens, a powerhouse of a performer, may sing Anglo-Scots ballads. The third Drop, Justin Robinson, seems to come up with original songs that make intriguing use of old-time instrumentation, and he furnishes the beatboxing for the Drops' bring-the-house-down version of the recent R&B chart-topper "Hit 'em Up Style."

So the collective Carolina Chocolate Drops sound does not come from any one place or time but is a unique mosaic, with plenty of stories to tell of how African American musicians made their way in a white-ruled world. And, with the whole brilliant, troubled history of American music as their pool of resources, the Carolina Chocolate Drops are advancing by leaps and bounds with their reclamation techniques and coming up with new things in each show. Not to be missed.

—James M. Manheim

lober, and Rowe. 8 p.m., Rackham Auditorium. Free. 764-0594.

"Degeneration": Kerrytown Concert House. Ann Arbor-bred New York-based jazz guitarist Ben Miller performs a program of ambient noise created with a deconstructed stereo electric guitar with multiple pickups. The show also incorporates radio and analog tape. 8 p.m., KCH, 415 N. Fourth Ave. \$10-\$25 (students, \$5). Reservations recommended. 769-2999.

"To Kill a Mockingbird": Ann Arbor Civic Theatre. Dec. 2-5. Debra Reichard directs local actors in Christopher Sergel's 1990 stage adaptation of Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about a lawyer in a small Depression-era southern town who defends a black man accused of raping a white woman. Stars Marc Holland, Talia Akiva, Eli Tell, Lache Williams, Ian Bejster, and Charlie Newhart. The Dec. 5 matinee is sponsored by Literature Alive! and features \$8 tickets for teachers and students and a talkback with the director and cast. 8 p.m., U-M Walgreen Drama Center Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin, North Campus. Tickets \$20 (seniors, \$18; students, \$10; Thurs., \$15) in advance at a2ct.org, at the A2CT office (322 W. Ann), and by phone, and at the door. 971-2228.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. Nov. 26-28 and Dec. 2-5, 9-12, 16-19, & 21-23. Jon Huffman, co-author of *Club Morocco*, directs this professional company in his and Encore founder Dan Cooney's adaptation of the beloved Frank Capra Christmas film about a good man tested by misfortune. The music is by the NY-based song-

writing team of Robert and Steven Morris. Cast TBA. 8 p.m., Encore, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Tickets \$28 (members & seniors, \$25; groups of 10 or more, \$22) in advance at theencoretheatre.org and at the door. 268-6200.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. Every Thurs.-Sun. (except Nov. 25 & Dec. 25), Nov. 11-Dec. 26. Carla Milarch directs Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison's 2006 Tony-winning musical, inspired by the Jazz Age, about an agoraphobic Broadway fanatic who tries to cheer himself up by listening to an LP of a fictional 1928 musical that comes to life in his living room. This hilarious play within the play, about a showgirl who's giving up her career to marry an oil tycoon, is crammed with every cliché, gag, and gimmick of the Jazz Age musical. Cast: Naz Edwards, Mark Hammell, Matt Andersen, Andrea Mellos, Eva Rosenwald, Phil Powers, Linda Hammell, Brian Thibault, Lisa Lauren Smith, and Charlie Sutherland. 8 p.m., Performance Network, 120 E. Huron. Tickets \$27 & \$29 (Thurs.), \$32 & \$34 (Fri. & Sat.), \$25 & \$27 (Sat. matinee), \$39 & \$41 (Sat. eve.). \$3 discount for seniors age 60 & over. Tickets available in advance at performancenetwork.org & by phone, and at the door. \$10 student discount in advance, half-price student tickets at the door only. For reservations, call 663-0681; to charge by phone, call 663-0696.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

Steve Hofstetter: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Dec. 2-4. Popular young comic known for his satirical social commentary, often about sports. He has

a weekly humor column on both Sports Illustrated.com and NHL.com, and he's a frequent guest on sports radio shows. Preceded by 2 opening acts. Alcohol is served. 8 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant). \$8 (Thurs.) & \$11 (Fri. & Sat.) reserved seating in advance, \$10 (Thurs.) & \$13 (Fri. & Sat.) general admission at the door. 996-9080.

3 FRIDAY

★23rd Annual Hometown Holiday: Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce. Dec. 3-5. Family activities, including Santa visits and crafts. Gingerbread house displays in shop windows and luminaria along Main St. in the evening. Highlights include the tree lighting ceremony and Santa's arrival (Dec. 3, 6-6:30 p.m., Pierce Park), breakfast with Santa (Dec. 4, 8:30-10:30 a.m., Chelsea Comfort Inn & Village Conference Center), a Holiday Parade (Dec. 4, 6 p.m., Main St.), a Hometown Holiday Concert (Dec. 5, 3 & 7 p.m., Chelsea Depot) by the Chelsea Chamber Players and the Holiday Festival of Lessons and Carols (Dec. 5, 6:30 p.m., Chelsea Retirement Community Chapel) and more. For a complete schedule of events, see chelseafestivals.com. 9 a.m.-10 p.m. (Dec. 3 & 4) & noon-7 p.m. (Dec. 5), downtown Chelsea. Free. 475-1145.

★"Bead Making": Barnes & Noble. Oak Trails Montessori School teachers help kids (accompanied by an adult) make a bead bracelet or necklace to take home. Noon-8 p.m., Barnes & Noble, 3235 Washtenaw. Free. 973-1618.

★"What Are Hotspots? (I Thought I Once Knew): New Perspectives on Oceanic Volcanism: U-M Geological Sciences. Lecture by Texas A&M oceanography professor Will Sager. 4 p.m., 1528 C.C. Little, 1100 North University. Free. 764-1435.

★"Connecting Histories: Retelling the Liturgical and the Classical in North Indian Musical Historiography": U-M Center for South Asian Studies Conference. Lecture by U-M ethnomusicology professor Meilu Ho. 4 p.m., 1636 SSWB, 1080 South University. Free. 764-0448.

"Moonlight Madness Craft Show": Saline Community Education. Juried show and sale of works by more than 130 crafters. Concessions, bake sale, and raffle. 5-11 p.m., Saline Middle School, 7190 N. Maple, Ann Arbor-Saline Rd., Saline. \$2 admission. 429-5922.

Ann Arbor Clay Tour. Dec. 3-5. Tours, sales, pottery demos, and exhibits at several local pottery studios. Maps available at annarborclaytour.com. Tonight: an opening reception at Yurist Studio Gallery. 6-9 p.m. (Dec. 4), Yurist Studio Gallery, 1133 Broadway, and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 4), & noon-3 p.m. (Dec. 5), various locations. Free admission. 662-4914.

"2nd Annual KindleFest": Kerrytown District Association. A holiday sale featuring local artisans and farmers, live music, and fire pits to roast s'mores. Pretzels, brats, and mulled wine available. Tonight is also **"Midnight Madness"** in the Kerrytown Market & Shops, with stores open till midnight, special holiday sales, live music by the Joe Summers Gypsy Jazz Quartet, strolling carolers, treats, and more. 6-10 p.m., Farmers' Market, Kerrytown. Free admission. 662-5008.

★"Book Launch, Beer, and Boomerang Bonanza": Workantile Exchange. Local writer Dave Nelson celebrates the release of his new craft book, *Snip, Burn, Solder, Shred: Seriously Geeky Stuff to Make with Your Kids*, with craft activities, including a chance to make cardboard boomerangs and play with some of the projects in the book. Refreshments. 6-8 p.m., Workantile Exchange, 118 S. Main. Free. 395-6779.

★"Midnight Madness": Main Street Area Association. Many merchants are open late tonight with special sales. Appearances by Santa and Miss Washtenaw County. Sidewalk entertainment (7-9 p.m.) includes Elvis tribute artist Chris Solano, swordplay stunts by Ring of Steel Action Theater, the Huron High School A Cappella Choir, and jugglers Ben Ruetenik and Joshua Dasen. Also, robot caroling at Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair (on the hour, 8-11 p.m.). Santa's Mailbox is accepting letters (postage to North Pole courtesy of the MSAA) Nov. 26-Dec. 16 at 117 E. Liberty (in front of Organic Bliss Boutique). 6 p.m.-midnight, Main Street shopping areas. Free admission. 668-7112.

★Mark Webster Reading Series: U-M English Department. Readings by U-M creative writing grad students. Today: prose by Nawaaz Ahmed and poetry by Ann Marie Thornburg. 7 p.m., UMMA Helmut Stern Auditorium, 525 S. State. Free. 615-3710.

"2nd Annual Kopitonez and Friendz Charity Concert": U-M Kopitonez. This student a cappella ensemble performs songs from Lady Gaga's *The Fame* Monster, Taeyang's *Solar*, and Christina Aguilera's *Back to Basics*. Also, performances by the Element 1 breakdancing crew, Revolution Chinese Yo-Yo, the

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The Nutcracker



December 4th & 5th

Saturday, Dec 4th
2:00 & 7:00pm

Sunday, Dec 5th
3:00pm

Ypsilanti High School Auditorium
2095 Packard Road, Ypsilanti



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www.ypsilantiareadancers.com
Randazzo Dance - 734-447-9350
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Note: Most educational documentaries are listed with the daily Events.

Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth. \$5 suggested donation. 327-0270. 704 Airport Blvd., 8 p.m.

Dec. 18: "Spiritual Cinema." Screening of a feature film or several shorts TBA with spiritual themes. Followed by discussion.

Jewel Heart Buddhist Center. FREE. 994-3387. Jewel Heart (1129 Oak Valley Dr. between Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. & Ellsworth), 7 p.m.

Dec. 17: "Imitation of Life" (John Stahl, 1934). Emotionally charged story about 2 widows, one white and one black, who raise their troubled daughters together. Claudette Colbert, Warren William, Rochelle Hudson. Based on the Fannie Hurst novel.

Michigan Theater Foundation. Unless there is a live show in the main theater, 2 or 3 different films are shown, usually twice, almost every night. For complete, updated schedules, see michtheater.org or call 668-TIME. Tickets (unless otherwise noted): \$9 (children, students, seniors, & veterans, \$7; MTF members, \$6.50; Wed., \$6). Michigan Theater, times TBA unless otherwise noted.

Through Dec. 2: "127 Hours" (Danny Boyle, 2010). A mountain climber resorts to desperate measures when he's trapped under a boulder. James Franco.

Dec. 2 & 5-7: "Howl" (Rob Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman, 2010). Drama about the 1957 obscenity trial over Allen Ginsberg's poem "Howl."

Dec. 4: "Wintervention" (Warren Miller, 2010). Recognized as the world's premier ski filmmaker, Miller has been making family-oriented ski adventure films for 60 years. He's a major star on the West Coast, where his films draw packed houses for weeklong runs, and the annual Michigan Theater showing usually draws 800 to 1,000 viewers. Tickets \$15 (kids age 12 & under, \$12) in advance at Sun & Snow Sports (2471 W. Stadium), the Michigan Union Ticket Office, & all other Ticketmaster outlets, and at the door. To charge by phone, call (800) 745-3000. 7 p.m.

Dec. 5: "A Christmas Story" (Bob Clark, 1983). Delightful, affectionate memoir of a 1940s childhood and the quest for a BB gun. Peter Billingsley, Darren McGavin. FREE. 4 p.m.

Dec. 6: "Jacob's Ladder" (Adrian Lyne, 1990). The hallucinatory "afterlife" journey of a young soldier bayoneted in the Vietnam War. Tim Robbins, Danny Aiello. 7 p.m.

Dec. 9: "Boxing Gym" (Frederick Wiseman, 2010). Documentary about an Austin boxing gym where people from all walks of life train to reach their personal best.

Dec. 10-16: "Tiny Furniture" (Lena Dunham, 2010). Drama about a recent college grad who returns to figure out what to do with her life.

Dec. 11: "Harmonium in My Memory" (Young-jae Lee, 1999). Set in South Korea in 1962, the film concerns a young schoolteacher whose student has a crush on him. When the teacher falls for another

teacher, the student does everything she can to discredit her older rival. Part of the U-M Center for Korean Studies "Coming of Age in Korean High School" film series. FREE. 2 p.m.

Dec. 12: "Miracle on 34th Street" (George Seaton, 1947). Heartwarming comedy about an amiable old man working as a department store Santa who ends up in court on trial for insanity when he tells a skeptical young girl that he's the real thing. Edmund Gwenn, Natalie Wood, Maureen O'Hara. FREE. 4 p.m.

Dec. 13: "Memento" (Christopher Nolan, 2000). Engrossing story, told in reverse chronological order, of a man with no short-term memory who's trying to hunt down his wife's killer. 7 p.m.

Dec. 15 & 16: "The Tillman Story" (Amir Bar-Lev, 2010). Documentary about the military propaganda surrounding the death of Pat Tillman who left a multimillion-dollar football contract to join the military.

Dec. 17 & other dates TBA: "Black Swan" (Darren Aronofsky, 2010). Thriller about the relationship between a veteran ballerina and her rival. Natalie Portman.

Dec. 18: "Pelada" (Luke Boughen & others, 2010). Documentary about the way ordinary people play soccer in countries around the world.

Dec. 19: "It's a Wonderful Life" (Frank Capra, 1946). Sentimental classic about a man who gets a second chance at his own life on Christmas Eve. James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore. FREE. 4 p.m.

Dec. 26: "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" (Elia Kazan, 1945). Charming, affecting story of an Irish American family determined to move up from the slums. Based on the beloved Betty Smith novel. Dorothy McGuire. Free. 4 p.m.

Projectorhead. FREE. 615-0445. U-M Lorch Hall auditorium, Tappan at Monroe, 7 p.m.

Dec. 4: "Marwencol" (Jeff Maimberg, 2010). Award-winning documentary about a man unable to remember his previous life after a violent attack who creates a scale-model WW II-era town in his yard as therapy. When a prestigious gallery becomes interested in his project, he has to make a choice between his fictional world and the real world.

Temple Beth Emeth "Movie Tuesday." FREE. 665-4744. 2309 Packard, 1 p.m. Snacks. Child care available with advance notice.

Dec. 21: "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (Woody Allen, 1989). Dark drama with rich comic interludes about a respected physician who decides to have his mistress killed. Martin Landau, Anjelica Huston.

U-M Center for Chinese Studies. Chinese Documentary Film Series. Free. 764-6308. Angell Hall Auditorium A (entrance at the Fishbowl on the east side of the bldg.), 7:10 p.m.

Dec. 4: "1966, My Time in the Red Guards" (Wu Wenguang, 1993). Documentary built around interviews with 5 former Red Guards, who reflect about their involvement in the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. Mandarin, subtitles.

Ford St. (off Lowell from Huron River Dr.), Ypsilanti. Tickets \$15 (students, \$12; kids age 12 & under, \$7) in advance and at the door. 487-2282.

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas": Saline Area Players. See 2 Thursday. 7 p.m.

★"Dorothy": U-M Basement Arts. See 2 Thursday. 7 & 11 p.m.

"Disco Night": Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation. All invited to skate to 70s disco music. Prizes for best costume. 7:15-8:45 p.m., Buhr Park Ice Rink, 2751 Packard. \$6 (youths age 17 & under and seniors age 60 & over, \$5). \$1 discount for city residents. Skate rentals available (\$3). 794-6235.

"Holiday Pipe Organ Showcase Concert": American Guild of Organists. Local organists Deborah Friauff, Joel Hastings, and Shin-Ae Chun perform festive holiday music by Sadowski, Bruhns, Elliott, Langlais, Demessieux, Hailstork and Quef. Also, carol singing. Reception follows. 7:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, State at Huron. Donation. 604-3205.

33rd Annual Boar's Head Festival: Concordia University. Dec. 3-5. Elegantly elaborate medieval English pageant celebrating Christ's birth with a blend of religious pageantry and secular pomp. Brian Altevogt directs a large cast of Concordia students, faculty, and staff as Beefeaters, hunters, jesters, and other court characters, as well as traditional Christmas shepherds and magi. With musical narration, congregational singing, and a full orchestra. This hugely popular event sells out in advance every year. 7:30 p.m., Concordia University Chapel of the Holy

Dec. 11: "Family, Inc" (Emily Ting & Helen Jen, 2008). Documentary about Ting's experience giving up a filmmaking career in America to take over her family's toy company in Hong Kong. English & Cantonese, subtitles.

U-M English Department Fantasy and Science Fiction/Theory Reading Group. FREE. 764-2253. Duderstadt Center Videoconference Suite, room 1180 (2281 Bonisteel, North Campus), 7 p.m.

Dec. 14: "Moon" (Duncan Jones, 2009). Contemplative sci-fi flick about an astronaut who's been isolated on the moon on a 3-year-long mission. Pizza. Age 21 & older admitted.

U-M International Institute Global Lens 2010 Series. FREE. 764-2268. 1636 SSWB, 1080 South University. 3 & 5 p.m.

Dec. 7: "Masquerades" (Lyes Salem, 2008). Comedy, set in a dusty Algerian village, about a well-intentioned fib that suddenly turns a gardener into a mogul, forcing him to choose between the happiness of his narcoleptic sister and his newfound celebrity. Arabic, subtitles.

Dec. 14: "My Tehran for Sale" (Granaz Moussavi, 2009). An ailing actress fighting for political asylum, and waiting to clear Australian immigration, recounts her attempts to live, work, and love in Tehran's thriving yet turbulent arts subculture. Persian & English, subtitles.

U-M Japanese Animation Film Society. U-M campus admission policy: No one under 18 admitted without an adult. FREE. umichanime.com. MLB, 812 E. Washington at Thayer, 10 a.m.-midnight.

Dec. 4: "Animania." Monthly anime-a-thon of feature films and episodes from Japanese TV series.

U-M Screen Arts and Cultures. FREE. 764-0147. Natural Science Auditorium, 6 p.m.-midnight.
Dec. 17 & 18: "Lightworks Festival." Screenings of animated, digital, and 16mm movies made by film students. Note: The Saturday show is usually "packed," says an organizer; get there early.

U-M Ukrainian Students Association. FREE. 358-2201. MLB location TBA, 812 E. Washington, 7 p.m.

Dec. 1: "The Soviet Story" (Edvins Snore, 2008). Award-winning documentary about Soviet-Nazi collaboration in the years before WW II. English & Russian, subtitles.

WCBN-FM. FREE admission. 763-3500. Arbor Brewing Company (114 E. Washington), 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 8: "Trapped in the Closet" (R. Kelly, 2007). Musical drama, a so-called "hip-hopera," about one-night stand that sets off a chain of events that gradually reveals a greater web of lies, sex, and deceit. It is set to a score by R&B singer Kelly that features a single melodic theme with varying lyrics.

Trinity, 4090 Geddes at Earhart. Tickets \$8-\$15 in advance at the Kreft Center Box Office and (if available) at the door. 995-4612.

"Little Shop of Horrors": Community High School Ensemble Theater. Dec. 3-5. Quinn Strassel directs Community High students in Howard Ashman and Alan Menken's musical, a wryly humorous, oddly tender-hearted black comedy about a carnivorous plant that grows to ferocious proportions. Adopted by a nerdy store clerk who fondly names it "Audrey" after the object of his unrequited affections, it initially seems to bring him good fortune—but as the plant thrives, it grows more and more bloodthirsty, driving its owner to murder. Inspired by a low-budget Roger Corman 1960 comedy-horror flick, the show was an off-Broadway hit in the early 1980s and became a musical film in 1986. The CHS production includes a chorus of beggars, street entertainers, and bums who surround the audience to create a Skid Row atmosphere, and the man-eating plant is portrayed by a team of live dancers in place of the usual single puppet. Cast TBA. 7:30 p.m., Community High School Craft Theater, 401 N. Division. (Parking available in the lot behind the school, N. Fifth Ave. at Detroit St.) Tickets \$10 (students & seniors age 65 & older, \$7) in advance and at the door. 994-2021.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream": EMU Dance Program. EMU dance students perform Balanchine's 2-act classical ballet set to Mendelssohn's incidental music for Shakespeare's comedy. The score is performed live by the EMU Symphony Orchestra. An abridged version of this program is presented earlier today at 10 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. in

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2 free 50-minute children's concerts (reservations required at 487-2448). 7:30 p.m., Pease Auditorium, W. Cross at College Place, EMU campus, Ypsilanti. Tickets \$10 (seniors & students, \$8; children under 12, \$6) in advance and at the door. 487-2282.

★Advanced Study Group: Rudolf Steiner Study Circle of Ann Arbor. Dec. 3 & 17. All invited to join an ongoing discussion of Rudolf Steiner's *How to Know Higher Worlds*. Familiarity with Steiner's basic ideas required. 8-9:30 p.m., Rudolf Steiner House (Dec. 3), 1923 Geddes, & location TBA (Dec. 17). Free. 944-4903.

★Student Songwriter Showcase: The Ark. In-the-round performances by 3 U-M student singer-songwriters competing for an opening performance at the Ark. 8 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 761-1451.

★U-M Contemporary Directions Ensemble: U-M School of Music. Christopher James Lees directs this adventurous music student ensemble in works by 2 guest composers-in-residence from the ground breaking new music ensemble Bang on a Can, Michael Gordon's *Who by Water* and Julia Wolfe's *Tell Me Everything*. Also, Stephen Hartke's *Them Rats Is Mean in My Kitchen* and Jefferson Friedman's *78*. 8 p.m., U-M Music School Britton Recital Hall, 1100 Baitz Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

“Harmaritaville! An A Cappella Extravaganza”: U-M Harmonettes. This peppy all-female student a cappella group performs songs by Michael Jackson, Joni Mitchell, ABBA, Jimmy Buffet, Lily Allen, Bonnie Raitt, and others. 8 p.m., Michigan League Ballroom. \$7. harmonettes@umich.edu.

“A Holiday Concert”: Measure for Measure. This local men's chorus and the U-M Women's Glee Club perform separate programs of holiday songs. The two groups also come together to sing Felix Mendelssohn's “Verleih uns Frieden.” 8 p.m., St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 2250 E. Stadium. \$15 (kids age 12 & under, seniors, & students with ID, \$12) in advance and at the door. 649-7664.

“55th Annual Study Break Concert”: U-M Friars. This self-styled “crack squad of supercrooners” is an a cappella octet drawn from the Men's Glee Club. 8 p.m., Rackham Auditorium. \$6 in advance at the Michigan Union Ticket Office, and at the door. 763-TKTS.

“DSO Does Midnight Madness”: Kerrytown Concert House. Detroit Symphony Orchestra members perform Prokofiev's Quintet for Winds and Strings and other chamber works. Musicians include clarinetist Shannon Orme, oboist Geoffrey Johnson, violinist Hong-yi Mo, viola player Jim van Valkenberg, and bassist Alex Hanna. In conjunction with the Kerrytown District Association KindieFest (see above). 8 p.m., KCH, 415 N. Fourth Ave. Tickets \$10-\$25 (students, \$5). Reservations recommended. 769-2999.

Don White: Green Wood Coffee House Series (First United Methodist Church). This veteran singer-songwriter from Lynn, MA, writes sharp-witted songs about everyday life that blend pathos, humor, and biting satire, and his live shows feature a lot of impromptu storytelling and comedy. His fans include Christine Lavin and Livingston Taylor, and he's released several acclaimed CDs, including the recent *Christine Lavin and Don White Live at the Ark*. Tonight he celebrates the release of a new CD, *Winning Streak*. Opening act is Detroit native **Chuck Mitchell**, a veteran singer-guitarist and actor whose shows mix poetry, cabaret songs, whimsical novelty tunes, and lively banter. Desserts & coffee available. 8 p.m., FUMC Green Wood Church, 1001 Green Rd. at Glazier Way. \$17 (kids age 10 & under, 2 for the price of 1) in advance and at the door. 665-8558.

Carolina Chocolate Drops: University Musical Society. See review, p. 49. This young African American string trio has revived the rich tradition of fiddle and banjo music in the Carolina Piedmont. The CCD learned their craft from Joe Thompson of Mebane, North Carolina, who was believed to be the last black traditional string band player, and their repertoire includes everything from old-time tunes with a distinctive African American inflection to jug band music, gospel, and an occasional Scots Gaelic song from the Cape Fear River region. “The passionate joy with which these musicians have embraced this music and its heritage is palpable and inspiring,” says *Living Blues*. “More than ‘revivalists,’ they approach their art in a spirit of in-the-moment celebration, making it accessible to everyday listeners as well as folklorists and aficionados.” 8 p.m., Michigan Theater. Tickets \$20-\$46 in advance at the Michigan League & ums.org, and (if available) at the door. To charge by phone, call 764-2538 or (800) 221-1229.

Dance and Related Arts Concert: U-M Dance Department. Dec. 3 & 4. U-M dance majors present an evening of multimedia collaborations with student and faculty composers, musicians, theatrical designers, sculptors, photographers, vocalists, and creative writers. 8 p.m. (doors open at 7 p.m.), U-M Dance

Bldg. Betty Pease Studio, 1310 North University Ct. \$5 at the door only. 763-5460.

“RAW Weekend”: Blackbird Theatre. Dec. 3 & 4. Staged readings of 2 plays. Tonight: Jeff Thomakos directs *Double Falsehood*, an 18th-century rewrite of a play now thought to have been originally written in part by Shakespeare. The plot concerns a wayward nobleman who tries to seduce his best friend's girl and forces himself on another young woman. Cast: Guy Sanville, Dennis North, Barton Bund, James Kuhl, Michael Brian Ogden, Julia Garlotte, and Hallie Bee Bard. 8 p.m., Shvau! Cabaret & Gallery, 325 Braun Ct. \$25 in advance at blackbirdtheatre.org and at the door. 332-3848.

“To Kill a Mockingbird”: Ann Arbor Civic Theatre. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

“Best of Friends”: Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

“It's a Wonderful Life”: Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

“The Drowsy Chaperone”: Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Steve Hofstetter: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 2 Thursday. 8 & 10:30 p.m.

Swing Dance Party: Ann Arbor Swing Dance Association/Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. Dec. 3, 10, & 17. Lindy hop, East Coast swing, Charleston, blues, and Balboa dancing to a DJ. No partner needed. Preceded at 8 p.m. by beginning lessons. 8:45 p.m.-midnight, Dakota Bldg., 1785 W. Stadium. \$5 (includes lessons; students, \$3). 417-9857.

★Angell Hall Observatory Open House: U-M Student Astronomical Society. Dec. 3 & 17. All invited to peer through the telescopes in the observatory and on the Angell Hall roof and to view shows in the planetarium. Also, short astronomy presentations by club members. 9-11 p.m., 5th floor rooftop observatory, Angell Hall (from the large State St. entrance, take one of the elevators on the left). Free. 764-3440.

4 SATURDAY

★“Home for the Holidays”: Dexter Area Chamber of Commerce. Activities begin with breakfast with Santa (8:30-10:30 a.m.), and Santa is also at the downtown gazebo (11 a.m.-4 p.m.). Events conclude at 6 p.m. with the lighting of the Christmas tree in Monument Park. Warm refreshments available. Roaming ice sculptors around town all day, along with carolers and other music. For a complete schedule, see dexterholiday.com. 8:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m., downtown and other locations, Dexter. Free admission. 426-0887.

★“December Bird Walk”: Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission. WCPARC naturalist Faye Stoner leads a hike through the woods to the wetlands and open water to look for winter birds. Bring binoculars, if you have them. 9-11 a.m., Independence Lake County Park, 3200 Jennings, north off North Territorial, Webster Twp. Free. 971-6337, ext. 334.

★“Cosmic Discovery Day”: U-M Exhibit Museum Discovery Day. Family-oriented program of activities and displays on space exploration and astronomy, including learning about the essentials of telescopes and the spectrum of light to launching a small rocket and trying to land it on target. Also, the planetarium show *Star Bits* (\$3) begins every hour on the hour, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., U-M Exhibit Museum, 1109 Geddes at North University. Free. 764-0478.

★Annual Holiday Bazaar and Children's Faire: Rudolf Steiner School. An artisan market, a toy room, storytelling and puppet theater, and activities, including jump rope winding and candle dipping, “cacao masterful creations” candy making, and beading. Musical performances, raffle, and refreshments. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Rudolf Steiner School, 2775 Newport Rd. Free admission. 995-4141.

“27th Annual Juried Art and Craft Festival”: Ann Arbor City Club. Sale of fabric art, photography, jewelry, watercolors, quilted items, and more. Around 60 vendors. Also, a sale of greenery, including wreaths and roping. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., AACC, 1830 Washtenaw. \$3 admission. 662-3279.

★“Open Microphone”: Gray Panthers of Huron Valley. All invited to share their personal involvement in social change efforts. Also, time permitting, showing of excerpts from *Rip: The Remix Manifesto*, a documentary about the recent change in federal copyright law that works to the exclusive benefit of large corporations. Refreshments. The program begins with coffee & socializing. 9:45 a.m.-noon, U-M Turner Senior Resource Center, 2401 Plymouth Rd. Free. 973-5593.

“Michigan Rocks!”: Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum. Dec. 4 & 5. Hands-on geology activities, including a chance to examine fossils, make an edible sedimentary rock, and learn how glaciers shaped the Michigan landscape. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Dec. 4) &

Mozart Birthday Bash

Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra
Conductor Arie Lipsky

Violin Yehonatan Berick
Viola Rebecca Albers



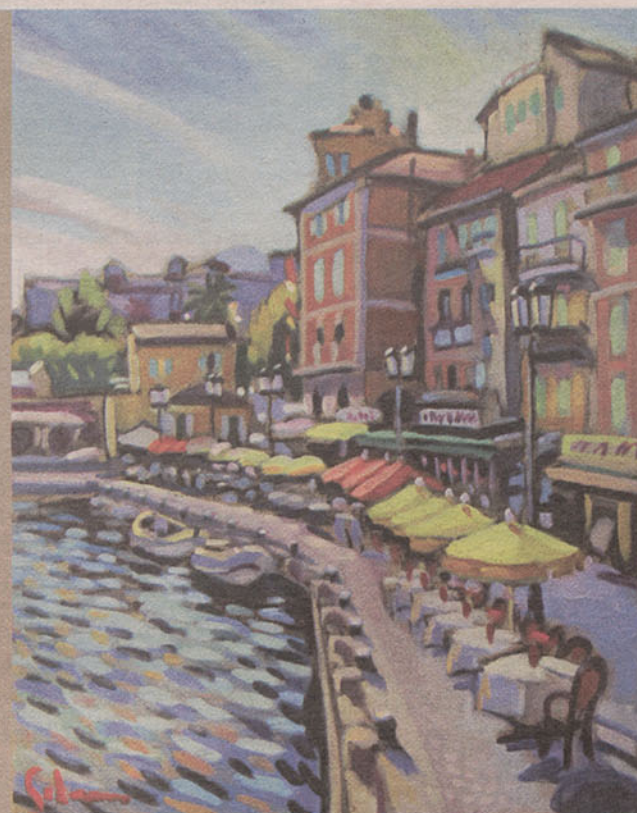
Serenade No. 12 in C minor, K. 388
Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major, K. 364
Symphony No. 36 in C major, K. 425

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Simon Dybbroe Møller

The mind of the artist

Like a lot of other people, I often find contemporary installation art to be groan inducing. What is meant to be a profound comment on some aspect of global society or a critique of traditional aesthetics all too often fails to get its point across. Thankfully, the new piece by Simon Dybbroe Møller at UMMA does not fit this model.

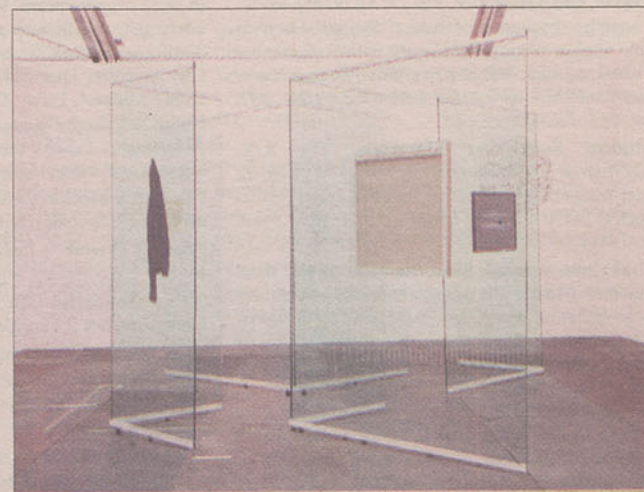
BRAIN II-V is the Danish artist's first solo exhibition in a U.S. museum, and it's a doozy. It is constructed of several sets of transparent plastic walls set out in a labyrinthine pattern through the gallery, and viewers can wander through them. Along the way they find a variety of disparate objects hanging on these walls: framed drawings and photos; a paint-spattered work coat; a one-way mirror; cryptic notebook pages (one contains a small map of central Berlin sketched by the artist); a painting that still reeks of wet enamel. According to curator Jacob Proctor, the work is "an allegory of the mind of the artist himself," something like an imaginary exhibit of bits and pieces gathered from Møller's life and artistic preoccupations.

It's a gimmicky conceit, for sure, but Møller pulls it off—mainly because the details he's chosen are so evocative and pre-

cise. Take the two shelves of objects on one wall. The wooden blocks carved into Tetris forms refer to one of Møller's earlier works; a bowl of European model toy cars speaks perhaps to some boyhood obsession (or maybe an allusion to the expense of owning a car in Denmark, where registration rates are exorbitant?); the volume by Villy Sørensen, the Danish hero of modernist prose, clearly touches on Møller's interest in the history of modernism.

Playing this kind of game can be fun, but I don't think Møller thought it essential. What is truly ingenious about *BRAIN* is the way it fits perfectly within its location. The transparent walls match the glass walls of the gallery, effectively collapsing the public space outside the gallery into the interior exhibition space. Formally this speaks to the supposed opacity of contemporary art—Møller's made his entire exhibition visible, down to the screws that hold up his scat-

"Brain I," 2009



tered items. Metaphorically we might say that it demonstrates the porous nature of memory: the artist's mind is on display for all to see, without clear definitions of inside and outside. Møller's piece works because it does not wholly rely upon foreknowledge of its concept; seeing the work as an allegory of the artist's mind is one way of experiencing the installation, but experiencing it without any prior knowledge is a visual experience just as meaningful. That, I'd argue, is the point, and it succeeds wonderfully.

—Grant Mandarino

New Exhibits this Month

Ann Arbor District Library, Downtown Branch (343 S. Fifth): *South of the Border: The 14th Annual Michigan Quilt Artist Invitational* (Dec. 2-Jan. 14). **Malletts Creek Branch** (3090 E. Eisenhower Pkwy.): *The Unseen Light: Photography by Gale Nobes* (through Dec. 15). **Archifest 2010: Architectural Photography from the American Institute of Architects, Huron Valley Chapter** (Dec. 18-Feb. 1). Mon. 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Tues.-Fri. 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. noon-6 p.m. 327-4510.

Dreamland Theater, 26 N. Washington St. Ypsilanti. *Taylor and Naia's Hoarder Museum* (opens Dec. 4). Unusual artifacts from the collections of Taylor McGraw and Naia Venturi, including taxidermy, puppets, art, scientific equipment, and more. Reception Dec. 4, 7 p.m. Hours during evening shows. 657-2337.

Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave. *Warp* (Dec. 1-Jan. 9). Multimedia works by over 20 local, regional, and national artists. Reception Dec. 3, 6-9

p.m. Tues.-Sat. noon-9 p.m., Sun. noon-4 p.m. 997-7012.

Gifts of Art (U-M Hospitals), Main Hospital: *Duct Tape Paintings* by Pete Warburton; *The Spirit of Chinese Brush: Paintings* by Christine (Yia-Shun) Yen; *Uncommon & Curious: Digital Fiber Arts* by Robbi Lindeman (Dec. 13-Feb. 7). **Taubman Center:** *The Prodigal Son: Snowflake Paper Cuttings* by Thomas Clark; *Shared Dreams: Sculpture* by Lisa Farris; *Saline Public Schools K-12 Student Group Show* (Dec. 13-Feb. 7). **Cancer Center:** *Simplicity of Form: Turned Wood* by Robert Savit; *Reflections in Watercolor* by Barbara Gasparski (Dec. 13-Apr. 11). Daily 8 a.m.-8 p.m. (except Cancer Center, Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). 936-ARTS.

Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave. *Dragonflies* (Nov. 29-Jan. 30). Photographs by Jianming Xiang taken over the last 20 years in China and the U.S. Reception Dec. 1, 5-7 p.m. Hours by appointment and during evening concerts. 769-2999.

River Gallery, 120 N. Main, Chelsea. *Thanks for Shopping Here!* (Nov. 13-Dec. 31). Hyperrealist oil paintings of shopping bags by Jaye Schlesinger. *Sotto Voce* (Nov. 13-Dec. 31). Mixed media works by Graceann Warn. Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-8 p.m., & Sun. noon-4 p.m. 433-0826.

U-M Exhibit Museum of Natural History, 1109 Geddes. *Rock Stars of the Ancient World* (ongoing). This new permanent exhibit features several rocks that are among the oldest things on earth, including a 2-million-year-old fossil of the oldest known multicellular organism. Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. noon-5 p.m. 763-4191.

U-M Museum of Art, 525 S. State. *Mai-Thu Perret: An Ideal for Living* (Dec. 18-Mar. 13). Works in various media that center around Perret's fictional narrative about a utopian women's community in New Mexico. See 19 Sunday Events listing. Tues., Wed., & Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thurs. & Fri. 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun. noon-5 p.m. 763-UMMA.

For a complete listing of local galleries, see the 2010-2011 Ann Arbor Observer City Guide or arborweb.com.

noon-4 p.m. (Dec. 5), AAHOM, 220 E. Ann. \$9 regular admission (members & infants, free). 995-5439.

Holiday Sale: Ann Arbor Potters Guild, Dec. 4 & 5. A popular annual sale held in a heated tent outdoors. Some 40 local artists offer a large selection of functional and decorative ceramics. Also, a kids area with gifts priced for their budgets. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Potters Guild, 201 Hill. Free admission. 663-4970.

Holiday Show: More Friends, Every Sat., Nov. 13-Dec. 18. Sale of baskets, dolls, glass, jewelry, paintings, paper arts, potions, pottery, soaps, textiles, and more. The show has a different theme each week. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., old West of the Moon Gallery, 112 E. Middle (rear entrance), downtown Chelsea. Free admission. 475-0182.

"Christmas on the Farm and at Dewey School": Waterloo Area Farm Museum, Dec. 4 & 5. This German immigrant pioneer homestead comes alive with the sights, sounds, and smells of a rural 1880s Michigan Christmas. Also, the log house features 1840s décor. Singers perform traditional holiday songs. Docent-guided tours of the 2-story brick farmhouse and tours of the one-room Dewey School. Refreshments. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Dec. 4) & noon-4 p.m. (Dec. 5), Waterloo Area Farm Museum, 9998 Waterloo Rd. (left off Clear Lake Rd. from I-94 exit 153), Chelsea. \$4 admission (seniors age 62 & over, \$3; kids ages 5-17, \$2; age 4 & under, free). (517) 596-2254.

Christmas Party: Downtown Home & Garden. Santa is on hand to talk to kids, give them a Christmas

orange, and take their Christmas lists. Free roasted chestnuts, eggnog, cider, and, while they last, smidgens of delicious smoked goose right from the store's Big Green Egg smoker. 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Downtown Home & Garden, 210 S. Ashley. Free. 662-8122.

"Hunters of the Sky": Wild Birds Unlimited. A Leslie Science & Nature Center naturalist discusses and displays live raptors, including an eagle. 10-11:30 a.m., Wild Birds Unlimited, 2208 S. Main, Woodland Plaza. Free. 665-7427.

"Music and Motion": Ann Arbor District Library. Local music teacher Beth Battey leads an interactive program of music and dance for preschoolers. 10-10:45 2 a.m., AADL Traverwood Branch, 3333 Traverwood at Huron Pkwy. Free. 327-4555.

Remote-Controlled Car Racing: Washtenaw RC Raceway, Dec. 4 & 18. One of the largest regular gatherings of RC racers in the country features off-road dirt-track racing for stock and modified model electric trucks and buggies. Spectators welcome. Food concessions. 10:30 a.m.-midnight, Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Doors open at 8 a.m. Free admission. \$16 to race. (313) 565-2815.

Children's Holiday Party: Kempf House Center for Local History. With storytelling, music, and a visit from the Sugar Plum Fairy from the Ann Arbor Ballet Theater *Nutcracker* (see 17 Friday listing). 10:30-11:30 a.m., Kempf House, 312 S. Division. \$5 per child. 994-4898.

"Saturday Morning Physics": U-M Physics Department. Popular series of talks, aimed at general audiences, by U-M and visiting scholars. Today: U-M physics professor emeritus Lawrence Jones on "Particle Accelerators or Atom Smashers: The Engines of Discovery." Note: The semester's final Saturday Morning Physics lecture is part of the "Physics Day of Celebration" on Dec. 11 (see listing). 10:30 a.m., 170 Dennison, 500 Church. Free. 764-4437.

"Christmas Gift & Bake Sale": St. Thomas Lutheran Church, 11 a.m.-noon, Freedom Township Town Hall, 11508 Pleasant Lake Rd. Free admission. 995-7384.

"Storytime at the Museum": UMMA, Dec. 4 & 11. U-M student docents read stories related to the art on display. For kids ages 4-7, accompanied by a parent. 11 a.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 764-0395.

"Santa Visits Kerrytown": Kerrytown Market & Shops, Dec. 4, 11, & 18. Appearance by Santa and live musical performances by local students, musicians, and choral groups. 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Kerrytown Market & Shops. Free. 662-5008.

"Wonderful and Unusual Gifts": Nature's Expressions, Dec. 4 & 5. Show and sale of crystalline mineral specimens, fossils, shells, mounted butterflies and other insects, and more. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., 3443 Daleview Dr. (off N. Maple Rd. north of Huron River Dr.). Free. 994-3048.

"Playing with Fire": Today's Brass Quintet Annual Croissant Concert (Kerrytown Concert House). A popular holiday tradition featuring fiery music by

this area professional ensemble. Program includes "Fire Dance," "Fireman's Parade March," "The Rejoicing" from Handel's *Fireworks Music*, and more. Members are French hornist Alan Taplin, trombonist Brian Robson, tubaist Joseph DeMarsh, and trumpeters David Ammer and Jean Moorehead Libs. Croissants, coffee, & juice. 11 a.m., Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave. \$15-\$30 (students, \$10). Reservations recommended. 769-2999.

"The Himalayan Bazaar in My Garage": Of Global Interest. Dec. 4, 11, & 18. Of Global Interest adventure tour company owners Pem Dorjee Sherpa and Heather O'Neal sell a wide variety of Nepali gift items they've picked up on their frequent trips to the Himalayas. Noon-5 p.m., 120 Eighth St. Free admission. 369-3107.

Draw Doubles: Local 101 Disc Golf Club. Every Sat. All invited to play disc golf at one of Hudson Mills Metropark's 24-hole courses. Beginners are paired with advanced players to create parity. Prizes. Discs can be borrowed at park office. Noon, Hudson Mills Metropark Activity Center, 8801 North Territorial Rd. (between Dexter-Pinckney Rd. & Huron River Dr.), Dexter. \$7 per player; free for spectators. \$5 vehicle entrance fee. 449-4300.

U-M Men's Basketball vs. Harvard. The U-M also has games this month against Concordia (Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m.), Utah (Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m.), North Carolina Central (Dec. 14, 7 p.m.), Oakland (Dec. 18, noon), Bryant (Dec. 23, 6 p.m.), and Purdue (Dec. 28, 2 p.m.). 1 p.m., Crisler Arena. \$15 & \$22. 764-0247.

"Political and Social Expressions in Art": UMMA. Dec. 4, 12, & 18. Docent-led tour of works in the museum that address political and social issues. In conjunction with the U-M LSA theme semester "What Makes Life Worth Living?" 1 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 763-UMMA.

German Family Christmas: Kempf House Center for Local History. Dec. 4, 5, 11, & 12. This restored 19th-century Greek Revival home is decked out with a traditional tree and decorations and exhibits reflecting a typical early 20th-century German American celebration of Christmas. Christmas cookies. 1-4 p.m., Kempf House, 312 S. Division. Free; donations welcome. 994-4898.

"Make a Gingerbread House": Washtenaw & Cranbrook Whole Foods Markets. Dec. 4 & 11. Demo by a Whole Foods staffer. Followed by a chance to make your own gingerbread house. 1 p.m. Washtenaw Whole Foods Market, 3135 Washtenaw, & 2 p.m., Cranbrook Whole Foods Market, 990 W. Eisenhower Pkwy., Cranbrook Village. \$19.99 gingerbread house kit fee. Preregistration required. 975-4500 (Washtenaw), 975-7500 (Cranbrook).

"Comic in a Box": Ann Arbor District Library. Comics artist Jerzy Drozd, a contributing editor to the online comics anthology sugaryserials.com, and his wife, AADL librarian Anne Drozd, help adults and teens in grade 6 & up make an accordion mini-comic and a box that fits it perfectly. Bring your favorite drawing tools; materials provided. 1-3 p.m., AADL Malletts Creek Branch, 3090 E. Eisenhower (between Stone School & Packard). Free. 327-4555.

Classical Bells: Ann Arbor District Library. Darlene Ebersole directs this acclaimed Detroit-area handbell ensemble whose varied repertoire includes classical, inspirational, seasonal, popular, and even ragtime and swing tunes. 1-2 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4560.

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas": Saline Area Players. See 2 Thursday. 1 & 3:30 p.m.

Ann Arbor Juggling Arts Club. Every Sat. All invited to practice their juggling skills. Beginners welcome. Indoor location TBA in case of inclement weather. 2-4 p.m., U-M Diag. Free. 761-1115.

"Out of the Ordinary: Selections from the Bohlen Wood Art and Fufeld Folk Art Collections": UMMA. Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12, & 18. Docent-led tours of the current exhibit. 2 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 763-UMMA.

"The Nutcracker": Ypsilanti Area Dancers. Dec. 4 & 5. This company of more than 60 dancers ages 6-24 performs Tchaikovsky's perennially popular Christmas ballet. Based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann, it tells the tale of a little girl whose magical nutcracker doll transports her to a fairyland on Christmas Eve. 2 & 7 p.m., Ypsilanti High School Auditorium, 2095 Packard. Tickets \$18 & \$20 in advance at ypsilantiareadancers.com and at the door. 417-2596.

Pittsfield Open Band: Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. Dec. 4 & 18. All musicians invited for a contra dance music open jam. Bring Judi Morningstar's *The Ruffwater Fakebook*, Susan Songer's *The Portland Collection*, and Bill Matthiesen's *The Waltz Book* if you have them. 3-6 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). Free. 994-9307.

Kids Open Stage: Oz's Music Environment. Kids of all ages and musical abilities are invited to play, sing, or just observe. Preceded at 3 p.m. by a kids drum circle (\$10) hosted by Oz's owner Steve Osburn. Drums provided. 4-5 p.m., Oz's, 1920 Packard. Free; donations welcome. 662-8283.

In Good Company African American Book Club: Nicola's Books. All invited to join a discussion of *The Future Has a Past*, J. California Cooper's short story collection about small town African American women who struggle to make something of their lives. 4 p.m., Nicola's, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 662-0600.

University Lowbrow Astronomers. Dec. 4 & 11. A chance to join local astronomy buffs for a look at the sky through Peach Mountain Observatory's huge, 24-inch McMath telescope and other instruments. Participants encouraged to bring their own telescopes. Visitors must turn off all electronic equipment (car radios, transmitters, phones, etc.) at the observatory entrance. Program canceled if sky is overcast at sunset or if the weather is extremely inclement. 5 p.m.-12:30 a.m. or as long as the sky remains clear, Peach Mountain Observatory, North Territorial Rd. (about 1/4 miles west of Hudson Mills Metropark), Dexter. Free. 332-9132.

"Family Latke Hop": Jewish Community Center. Dinner, with dancing to live music, kids games and craft activities, and a community candle-lighting ceremony. 6-9 p.m., JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr. (off Stone School Rd. south of Packard). Admission: \$14 (kids, \$6) for nonmembers, \$12 (kids, \$5) for members. Reservations requested. 971-0990.

14th Annual Ypsilanti Holiday Homes Tour: Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels Fund-Raiser. Dec. 4 & 5. Tour of 5 historic Ypsilanti homes and a display of 10 decorated Christmas trees at the First Baptist Church. The Dec. 4 "Taste of Ypsi Candlelight Tour" includes food from area restaurants and ends with a dessert reception. Also, on Dec. 5, live piano and classical guitar music on the hour at Nelson Amos Studio (23 E. Cross). 6-10 p.m. (Dec. 4) & noon-4:30 p.m. (Dec. 5), various locations. Tickets \$40 (Dec. 4) & \$15 (Dec. 5) in advance in Ypsilanti at Nelson Amos Studio (Dec. 4 tour) and Haab's Restaurant (Dec. 5 tour), \$20 (Dec. 5 only) day of tour. 487-9669.

1st Saturday Contra: Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. Live music. All dances taught; no partner needed. Bring flat, smooth-soled shoes. The evening begins with an hour of English country dancing. 7 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). \$10 (members, \$9; students, \$5). 769-1052.

"Polar Express Pajama Party": Barnes & Noble. Barnes & Noble staff (in costume) present an interactive reading of Chris Van Allsburg's Caldecott Medal-winning tale of a magical train ride on Christmas Eve. The reading includes a break for hot chocolate, a sing-along of holiday songs, and a visit from Santa. For kids age 3 & up. 7 p.m., Barnes & Noble, 3235 Washtenaw. Free. 973-1618.

Winter Concert: U-M Good News. This coed Christian a cappella ensemble performs contemporary Christian songs. Refreshments. 7-9 p.m., Angell Hall Auditorium B. Free. goodnews@umich.edu.

"Joyful & Triumphant": Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church. The Divine Shepherd Choir is joined by members of the U-M music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia for a program of sacred and secular seasonal music, interspersed with carol sing-alongs. Reception follows. 7-10:30 p.m., Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2600 Nixon Rd. Free, but cash and nonperishable food donations for Food Gatherers encouraged. 761-7273.

Opera Workshop: EMU Music Department. EMU voice majors perform scenes from major operas TBA. 7 p.m., EMU Alexander Recital Hall, Lowell at E. Circle Dr., Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

"The Romeo and Juliet Project": UMMA/U-M School of Music, Theatre, and Dance. Joshua Major directs U-M opera students in scenes from Shakespeare's tragic romance, with a collage of operatic settings of the play by Charles Gounod, Vincenzo Bellini, and excerpts from *West Side Story*. 7 p.m., UMMA Apse, 525 S. State. Free. 764-0395.

"Pippi Longstocking": EMU Theater Department. See 3 Friday. 3 & 7 p.m.

"Dorothy": U-M Basement Arts. See 2 Thursday. 7 p.m.

"Drum 4 Wellness Circle": Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth Cafe 704 Coffeehouse. All invited to join a drum circle. Bring a drum or use one provided. 7:30-9 p.m., Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Blvd. \$5 suggested donation. 480-1219.

33rd Annual Boar's Head Festival: Concordia University. See 3 Friday. 7:30 p.m.

"Little Shop of Horrors": Community High School Ensemble Theater. See 3 Friday. 7:30 p.m.



Messiah Sing

Saline High School

Calling All Singers...

Here's your opportunity to join others for a relaxed evening of singing the most famous choruses from Handel's magnificent oratorio, *The Messiah*. We'll begin with a brief rehearsal of the choruses followed by a break for refreshments. The performance will begin around 8:00p.m. Students and faculty from Eastern Michigan University will be featured as soloists. The conductor will be Trey Jacobs, director of choral activities at EMU. Whether you are a veteran Messiah singer or a first-timer, come and sing with us!

What: All-Community Messiah Sing

When: Monday, December 6, 2010

Where: Saline High School Performing Arts Center
1300 Campus Parkway, Saline

Time: 6:00p.m. - check in
6:30p.m. - rehearsal
8:00p.m. - Messiah Sing performance

Cost: \$5.00 participation fee
Donations also accepted at the door for the Saline High School Choral Music Program

Information: freemann@saline.k12.mi.us
734.429-8000 ex 2267

The Jewish Cultural Society
Invites You to Attend

TU B'SHEVAT
MATTHAEI BOTANICAL GARDENS



JCS Tu B'shevat focuses on the historical, cultural, and ecological elements of the Jewish holiday known as the "birthday of the trees" and includes activities for both children and adults.

celebrate tu b'shevat
in the lush, green environment of
the Matthaei Botanical Gardens!

Delight the senses with the sights, sounds, tastes and traditions of Tu B'shevat! Learn about plants that have ancient and historical significance and connect with local environmental groups.

January 23, 2011
10am-Noon

Matthaei Botanical Gardens
1800 N. Dixboro Rd.

Questions?
www.jewishculturalsociety.org
734.975.9872

Co-Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah and the Jewish Community Center.

Participate in a plant scavenger hunt through the conservatory.

Other activities include music, paper-making, & seed planting!

M school of art & design



11.19/12.14

EXHIBITION: A&D's Annual All Student Exhibition

Covering all of A&D's Ann Arbor galleries, this creative extravaganza celebrates the work of A&D undergraduate and graduate students.

Slusser Gallery

1st floor 2000 Bonisteel Blvd., Ann Arbor

Warren Robbins Gallery

2nd floor 2000 Bonisteel Blvd. Ann Arbor, MI

Work • Ann Arbor

306 S. State, Ann Arbor



12.2

PENNY STAMPS DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS SERIES: Luis Comiak

Title: INFLUENCING TRAIN DESIGN

International Transportation Design Consultant and Industrial Design Engineer Luis Comiak discusses the complex issues that influence modern rail vehicle design. Recent projects include the China Zefiro VHS (Very High Speed) Train and Metro Singapore. With support from the College of Engineering, and UM SMART - Sustainable Mobility and Accessibility Research and Transformation.

PRESENTATION: 5:10pm

Michigan Theater

603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor



12.3/12.24

EXHIBITION: Touch

In the majority of cases, the act of touching creative work is frowned upon by both creator and presenter. However some work not only allows touch but, invites it and even needs it for effective connection. Work • Detroit removes the vitrines, takes the signs down, moves the ropes, and holds the door open for a more visceral and tactile exchange with the creative process.

EXHIBITION OPENING RECEPTION:

Dec. 3rd 6:00 - 9:00pm

Work • Detroit

3663 Woodward Avenue, Detroit



12.9

PENNY STAMPS DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS SERIES: Natasha Tsakos

Title: UP WAKE

Playwright and performer Natasha Tsakos performs from her live 3D animated show UP WAKE, where new technologies inspire people to think differently about Art, Science, and Humanity. A featured event of the "Play Makes Life Worth Living" theme semester collaboration with support from the University Musical Society (UMS), the Center for Performing Arts Technology, and the Department of Theater & Drama.

PRESENTATION: 5:10pm

Michigan Theater

603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor



Thomas Lynch

All seem like godsend now

Earlier this year Thomas Lynch came through town to celebrate the publication of *Apparition & Late Fictions*, his first collection of stories. And now, at the end of the year, the ever prolific Lynch comes back to introduce us to *Walking Papers*, his first collection of new poems in over a decade. Although his first career—small-town funeral director—would be more than enough to occupy most of us for a lifetime, Lynch has made a second—acclaimed American writer of poems, stories, and essays—from the stuff of the first.

The title poem of this collection is addressed to a friend who might be a bit overly worried about the minutiae of his health. The poet—who as a funeral director has a certain authority on matters concerning death—reminds his friend that

something's going to get you in the end.

The numbers are fairly convincing on this,

hovering, as they do, around a hundred

percent. We die. And more's the pity.

Same for the goose as for the gander, true

for both saints and sinners, fit and fat.

We get our dose of days and after that we get whatever is or isn't next:

heaven, remembered, a kick in the ass,

a place in a frame on some grand-kid's piano,

a grave, a tomb, the fire, our ashes scattered,

the scavenging birds, the deep, nirvana—

sure, one oblivion's good as another.

The cataloging and the quiet humor about mortality are devices familiar to Lynch's readers. He has been reminding us of our tentative connections to life for thirty years now, and he continues to provide a useful antidote to our anxieties.

But there is something new in these later poems, written as Lynch moved toward and into his sixties. Always a poet to celebrate the little pleasures, he has learned a kind of gratitude for them, a humility before the smallest gifts. That gift might simply be the smells from "Monaghan's Fish Market" in Kerrytown, which is the penultimate poem in *Walking Papers*, or a slightly more inclusive reflection, as in "Refusing at Fifty-Two to Write Sonnets," the final poem in the collection. Here, after realizing that there are only so many decades that could lie ahead of him, the poet reflects:

The future, thus confined to its contingencies,

The present moment opens like a gift:

The balding month, the grey week, the blue morning,

The hour's routine, the minute's passing glance—

All seem like godsend now. And what to make of this?

At the end the word that comes to him is Thanks.

Thomas Lynch reads from *Walking Papers* at Nicola's on December 7.

—Keith Taylor

"G-rassic Park": U-M G-Men. This all-male student a cappella ensemble sings a program that ranges from Motown and chart hits to songs by local musicians. 8 p.m., Rackham Auditorium. \$10 (students, \$5) in advance at the Michigan Union Ticket Office or thegmen.org, and at the door. 763-TKTS.

"Holiday International Folkdance & CD Release Party." Balkan and Israeli dancing to live music by The Ethnic Connection, a local band celebrating the release of their debut CD. 8-11 p.m., the barn at Gretchen's House V, 2625 Traver. \$8-\$10 (students, \$3-\$5) donation. 995-0011.

Singles Dance: Parents Without Partners. Dec. 4 & 17. All singles invited for an evening of dancing and socializing. Recorded 70s to contemporary dance music played by a DJ. Cash bar. 8 p.m.-midnight, Grotto Club, 2070 W. Stadium. \$8 (PWP members, \$6). 578-3664.

"Milonga Picante": Michigan Argentine Tango Club. Dec. 4 & 18. Tango dancing to music spun by a DJ. Note: People not affiliated with the U-M must arrive before 9 p.m. 8 p.m.-midnight, Michigan League Vandenberg Room. \$10 (members, \$5). umich.edu/~umtango.

Michigan Marching Band Annual Crisler Concert. A festive concert featuring highlights of the past season's pregame and halftime shows, plus U-M school songs. 12:30 p.m., Crisler Arena. Tickets \$10 (kids age 11 & under, \$3) in advance at U-M Credit Union branches, and at the door. 764-0582.

★Arthur Greene: U-M School of Music. This U-M piano professor performs Sgambati's transcription of the main theme from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Busoni's arrangement of Bach's Chaconne, Chopin's Sonata no. 2 in B-flat minor, Scriabin's Sonata no. 5, Rachmaninoff's Prelude in D major, and Rachmaninoff's transcription of Kreisler's *Liebesfreud*. 8 p.m., U-M Music School Recital Hall, 1100 Baitz (off Broadway), North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

132nd Annual "Messiah": University Choral Union (University Musical Society). Dec. 4 & 5. Jerry Blackstone directs the Choral Union, harp-sichordist Edward Parmentier, and members of the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra in Handel's beloved oratorio. The soloists are soprano Caitlin Lynch, tenor Nicholas Phan, and baritone Jesse Blumberg—all 3 U-M alums—and Kalamazoo contralto Meredith Arwady. The Choral Union *Messiah*, featuring a thunderous sing-along of the "Hallelujah" Chorus, has been an Ann Arbor tradition ever since organist (and U-M president) Henry Frieze led an impromptu community chorus in the spring of 1879, a performance that led to the formation of both the Choral Union and the UMS. 8 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Tickets \$10-\$32 in advance at the Michigan League Box Office & ums.org, and (if available) at the door. To charge by phone, call 764-2538 or (800) 221-1229.

"RAW Weekend": Blackbird Theatre. See 3 Friday. Tonight: *Celebrity Autobiography*. Local actors read from the unintentionally hilarious memoirs of famous people, including Martina Navratilova, Marky Mark, and others. Cast: Laura Dysarczyk, Courtney Myers, Callie McKee, and others. \$15-\$25. 8 p.m.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 3 & 8 p.m.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 3 & 8 p.m.

"To Kill a Mockingbird": Ann Arbor Civic Theatre. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Steve Hofstetter: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 2 Thursday. 8 & 10:30 p.m.

"Serious about Salsa" Latin Dance Party: danceRevolution Dance Studio. Dec. 4 & 18.

High-energy dance party with salsa, merengue, bachata, and cha-cha dancing to music spun by a DJ. No partner necessary. 9 p.m.-1 a.m., *danceRevolution*, Dakota Bldg., 1785 W. Stadium. \$5. (313) 808-0358.

5 SUNDAY

Christmas Bazaar: St. Aidan's Episcopal Church/Northside Presbyterian Church. Sale of handmade jewelry, beadwork, and more. 9 a.m.-2 p.m., St. Aidan's/Northside, 1679 Broadway at Baits Dr. Free admission. 663-5503.

"Gift-Fest 2010": Ann Arbor Artists' Collective 12th Annual Holiday Show. Show and sale of original works by 25 local artists, including jewelry, ceramics, glass, fiber, paper, baskets, paintings, and more. Refreshments & raffle. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). Free admission. 272-2901.

***Hanukkah Party: Ann Arbor Jewish Cultural Society.** Family-oriented program featuring a Hanukkah play and secular observance, singing & dancing, craft activities, and games. All invited. 10 a.m.-noon, Jewish Community Center, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr. (off Stone School Rd. south of Packard). Free. 975-9872.

***"Buddhism": Jewel Heart Buddhist Center.** Every Sun. Talk by Gelek Rimpoche, an incarnate lama from Tibet who lives in Ann Arbor, or one of his students. Dec. 5: Sandy Finkel on "The Selfless Self." Dec. 12: Speaker TBA on "Turning the Tables on Jealousy." Dec. 19: Gelek Rimpoche on "Liberating Habits." Dec. 26: Speaker TBA on "Life Directions." 10-11 a.m., Jewel Heart Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr. (between Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. & Ellsworth). Free. 994-3387.

***"The New Health Care Law": Ann Arbor Unitarian Fellowship.** Talk by Andy LaBarre, district administrator for Congressman John Dingell. 10 a.m., Burns Park Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin. Free. 994-4473.

***H.A.C. Ultimate.** Every Sun. All invited to a very relaxed pickup game of this spirited team sport played with a flying disc. Note: Overly competitive players are politely asked to leave. 11 a.m., Mitchell Field. Free. 846-9418.

27th Annual Alternative Holiday Fair: Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. Handmade arts and crafts from Ten Thousand Villages, SERRV, and other organizations selling items made by artisans living in third-world countries. Toys, jewelry, ornaments, leather crafts, pottery, and more. Also, Heifer Project animals on site for petting. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., First Baptist Church, 512 E. Huron. Free admission. 663-1870.

***Mature Singles: First Presbyterian Church.** Every Sun. A weekly program open to all single adults interested in contemporary Christian topics, new ideas, personal growth, and social and physical activities. Dec. 5: Marcy Toon discusses her *Peace Corps experience in Sierra Leone, 1964-1966*. Dec. 12: Laura Berg plays the DVD "God of Israel," an episode from the Teaching Company series on the Old Testament. Dec. 19: Robert Klingler plays and leads a discussion of a CD recording of Matthew Kelly's "Becoming the Best Version of Yourself: Living Every Day with Passion and Purpose." Dec. 26: All invited to share Christmas holiday news. 11 a.m., First Presbyterian Church Curtis Room, 1432 Washtenaw. Free. 662-4466, ext. 43.

"Country Christmas": Cobblestone Farm Association. Re-creation of mid-19th-century Christmases, with period decorations, cooking on the woodstove, and live music. Also, a chance to visit with Father Christmas and make period holiday crafts to take home. Costumed interpreters provide tours of the restored 1844 Ticknor-Campbell farmhouse and its grounds, and this year each room of the farmhouse showcases the work of a different local florist. Gift shop. Noon-4 p.m., Cobblestone Farm, 2781 Packard (next to Buhr Park). \$2 (family, \$8; children under 3, free). 794-7120.

***Student Recital: Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts.** Program TBA at aa-spa.org. Noon-1:15 p.m., 1:45-3 p.m., & 3:30-5 p.m., AASPA, 637 S. Main. Free. 213-2000.

***Storytime: Downtown Borders.** Every Sun. A Borders staffer reads stories for kids. 1 p.m., Borders, 612 E. Liberty. Free. 668-7652.

***Maize 'n' Blue Intrasquad: U-M Women's Gymnastics.** The U-M women's gymnastics team, which ranked 10th nationally last year, prepares for the 2010-2011 season with an intrasquad meet. 1 p.m., Crisler Arena, S. State at Hoover. Free. 764-0247.

***"The Collector's Eye": UMMA.** Dec. 5, 11, & 19. Docent-led tour of the museum that highlights collectors who have had a large influence on UMMA holdings. In conjunction with the U-M LS&A theme semester "What Makes Life Worth Living?" 1 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 763-UMMA.

Contact Improv. Every Sun. All invited to try this interactive, free-form dance style that involves a rolling point of contact between two or more people through which dancers give and share weight. It is somewhere between tango, modern dance, aikido, wrestling, gymnastics, and none of the above, and usually takes place without music. People do contact improv in any combination of genders, and there are no steps. No partner required; beginners welcome. Followed by discussion and socializing. 1-3 p.m., Phoenix Center, 200 S. Main (above Elmo's). \$5-\$10 sliding scale based on ability to pay. 604-4416.

***"Comic Artists Forum": Ann Arbor District Library.** Local comic artist Katie Cook, whose work can be seen in many Star Wars products and who recently started an all-ages comic, *gronk*, a monster's tale at gronkcomic.com, offers drawing tips for adults and teens in grade 6 & up. Bring your favorite drawing tools; paper provided. 1-3 p.m., AADL Mallett Creek Branch, 3090 E. Eisenhower (between Stone School & Packard). Free. 327-4555.

***"Amigurumi Crochet Happy Fun!": Ann Arbor District Library.** Hands-on introduction to the Japanese art of crocheting small stuffed toys. For adults & youth in grade 6 & up. 1-4 p.m., AADL Pittsfield Branch, 2359 Oak Valley Dr. between Scio Church Rd. and Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Free. 327-4555.

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas": Saline Area Players. See 2 Thursday. 1 & 3:30 p.m.

***"How I Find Weird Things in History": Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County.** Talk by Milan News Leader local history columnist Martha Churchill, author of books on Milan, Dundee, and trolleys in Washtenaw County. Followed by a panel discussion with club members Bobbie Snow, Carolyn Griffin, and Dick Miller on "Religious Affiliation: Quaker, Baptist, and Brethren." 1:30 p.m., Dixboro United Methodist Church, 5221 Church Rd. (off N. Dixboro Rd. just north of Plymouth Rd.). Free. 483-2799.

U-M Exhibit Museum Planetarium. Every Sat. & Sun. (except Dec. 4, 25 & 26) and Dec. 27-30. Four different audiovisual planetarium shows. *The Sky Tonight* (11:30 a.m. Sat. & Dec. 27-30, 1:30 both weekend days & Dec. 27-30, 3:30 p.m. both weekend days) is an exploration of the current night sky. *Two Small Pieces of Glass: The Amazing Telescope* (2:30 p.m. both weekend days) explores how telescopes work and what they can do. *Hubble Vision* (12:30 p.m. Sat. only) is an audiovisual show about the discoveries made by the Hubble Space Telescope. *The Little Star That Could* (12:30 p.m. Dec. 27-30 only) is about an average yellow star on a search for a planet of its own to warm who meets other stars on the way and learns about the Solar System. 1:30, 2:30 & 3:30 p.m., U-M Exhibit Museum, 1109 Geddes at North University. \$5. 764-0478.

***35th Annual Christmas Sing: Western Kiwanis Club of Ann Arbor.** More than 500 people usually attend this family-oriented event. Kiwanis members Jeff Crause, Charlie Phibbs, Mike Fedel, and Tony Fahmie lead the audience in a sing-along of favorite Christmas carols. Organ accompanist is Andrew Rogers. Also, a visit from Santa and guest performances by Miss Washtenaw County and local musicians TBA. Emcee is local radio personality Lucy Ann Lance. Free cider & donuts from the Washtenaw Dairy. 1:30 p.m., Michigan Theater. Free. 668-8397.

***Gabriel Richard High School Madrigal Singers: Barnes & Noble.** Anne Kolaczowski directs this high school ensemble in a program of traditional Christmas music. 2 p.m., Barnes & Noble, 3235 Washtenaw. Free. 973-1618.

***"Kerry Tales: Ring a Bell with Mother Goose": Kerrytown Shops.** 30-minute family-oriented program of rhymes, riddles, and stories with local storyteller Trudy Bulkley as Mother Goose. 2 p.m., Hollander's, 407 N. Fifth Ave. (Kerrytown). Free. 769-3115.

***"Wrap It Up": Ann Arbor District Library.** All kids in grades 4 & up and adults invited to make their own holiday wrapping paper and tags. Supplies provided. 2-3:30 p.m., AADL Traverwood Branch, 3333 Traverwood at Huron Pkwy. Free. 327-4555.

***"Late Fall Woods Wander": Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission.** WCPARC naturalist Faye Stoner leads a hike to identify trees and shrubs and look for forest mushrooms, berries, and seeds. 2-4 p.m., West Lake Preserve, meet on the north side of Waterloo Rd. between Werkner and McKinley, east of M-52, Chelsea. Free. 971-6337, ext. 334.

Ann Arbor TubaChristmas. All invited to bring an instrument and a music stand (with clothespins) to join around 40 players in this annual outdoor performance of holiday carols on tubas, euphoniums, sousaphones, and baritone horns. One of many outdoor concerts held today across the nation and in Canada in memory of TubaChristmas founder Harvey Phillips. Registration and rehearsal at the U-M Walgreen Drama Center Stamps Auditorium (1226 Murfin,

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E

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December 14th
8:30 - 10:30 am

Information Meeting for Prospective Kindergarten and First Grade Parents

January 14th
10:00 - 11:00 am

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to reserve a space.
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2010-11 National Team Development Program Home Schedule

Date	Team	Opponent	Time
Sept. 17	Under-18	Youngstown Phantoms	7:00 p.m.
Sept. 18	Under-17	Youngstown Phantoms	2:30 p.m.
Sept. 24	Under-17	Traverse City North Stars	7:00 p.m.
Sept. 25	Under-17	Traverse City North Stars	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 8	Under-18	Dubuque Fighting Saints	7:00 p.m.
Oct. 9	Under-17	Dubuque Fighting Saints	3:00 p.m.
Oct. 9	Under-18	Muskegon Lumberjacks	7:00 p.m.
Oct. 10	Under-17	Chicago Steel	3:00 p.m.
Oct. 29	Under-17	Indiana Ice	7:00 p.m.
Oct. 30	Under-17	Green Bay Gamblers	7:00 p.m.
Nov. 5	Under-17	Muskegon Lumberjacks	7:00 p.m.
Nov. 20	Under-18	Omaha Lancers	7:00 p.m.
Nov. 21	Under-18	Indiana Ice	3:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	Under-17	Cedar Rapids RoughRiders	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 10	Under-18	Cedar Rapids RoughRiders	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 11	Under-18	Chicago Steel	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 12	Under-17	Indiana Ice	3:00 p.m.
Jan. 8	Under-17	Sioux City Musketeers	7:00 p.m.
Jan. 9	Under-17	Youngstown Phantoms	3:00 p.m.
Jan. 14	Under-18	Green Bay Gamblers	7:00 p.m.
Jan. 15	Under-18	Youngstown Phantoms	4:00 p.m.
Jan. 22	Under-17	Sioux Falls Stampede	7:00 p.m.
Feb. 3	Under-18	Tri-City Storm	7:00 p.m.
Feb. 18	Under-17	Muskegon Lumberjacks	7:00 p.m.
Feb. 19	Under-17	Chicago Steel	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 2	Under-17	Waterloo Black Hawks	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 4	Under-18	Waterloo Black Hawks	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 5	Under-18	Des Moines Buccaneers	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 6	Under-17	Fargo Force	3:00 p.m.
Mar. 8	Under-17	Indiana Ice	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 22	Under-17	Chicago Steel	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 25	Under-18	Lincoln Stars	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 27	Under-17	Des Moines Buccaneers	3:00 p.m.
Apr. 2	Under-17	Youngstown Phantoms	7:00 p.m.

All Home Games at the Ann Arbor Ice Cube

Ticket Prices: \$6 Adults, \$4 Students/Active-Military/Seniors, \$1 Youth Hockey Player w/ Jersey; Group Rates Available
IIHF WORLD UNDER-18 CHAMPIONS - 2002, 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010

Ann Arbor Figure Skating Club 2011 Winter Sessions

Learn to Skate Group Lessons (Classes held at the Ann Arbor Ice Cube)

Classes

Tuesdays 6:15pm to 7:05pm
Thursdays 6:15pm to 7:05pm
Saturdays 10:15am to 11:05am

Winter Classes - January 4 through March 12, 2011
Registration begins December 1, 2010

Shooting Stars Program

Shooting Stars is an introduction to freestyle skating for badges 6 and above, presented in a fun group class. Skaters will learn a freestyle routine containing jumps and spins as well as continue to improve their skating fundamentals. Off ice dance included as part of program.

See above dates
Saturdays, 9:15 to 11:05am

Hockey Classes for 3 to 6 year olds!

These classes will be held on Tuesdays, 6:15 to 7:05 pm. Classes are designed for the beginning hockey skater. It is recommended that skaters complete the Snow Plow Sam 1 class before taking a hockey class. Equipment is optional.

You are invited to attend a Winter Exhibition by AAFSC skaters on Sunday, December 12th, from noon-2:00 pm. Admission is by donation of canned foods that is being collected for Food Gatherers.

AAFSC

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classical music



The University Symphony Orchestra An evening of British music

When it comes to classical music in the twentieth century, some countries had the mojo, and some didn't. After ruling classical music for nearly three centuries, Germany and Austria lost their mojo with the rise of Fascism and the loss of two wars. At the same time, while Britain had always been a nice place for composers to visit—and Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn did so, famously—the sceptred isle lost its home-grown mojo when Purcell died at the end of 1695.

British classical music got its mojo back in the early twentieth century as part of a general cultural efflorescence around the fin de siècle. But unlike the Germans and Austrians, the Brits kept theirs—by the end of the century, the most requested piece on classical radio stations was Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Greensleeves*.

Music director Kenneth Kiesler has come up with a killer program of British music for the University Symphony Orchestra concert on December 10 that'll test its Anglophile mojo—even without RVW.

Kiesler and the USO will end at the beginning with the first piece that put England back on the musical map: Edward Elgar's

super-virtuoso *Enigma Variations* of 1899, for full Romantic orchestra plus organ. A set of oblique character studies of the composer's wife and friends—including noble "Nimrod" and hilarious "Bulldog Dan" variations—it concludes with a finale depicting the composer himself, with flags flying and organ blaring.

In the middle, they'll play Benjamin Britten's youthful setting of Arthur Rimbaud's *Les Illuminations* for tenor soloist and strings, from 1939. Tactile yet twisted, sensitive yet sinister, flushed with ecstasy yet touched with madness, the song cycle will be sung by tenor Kyle Knapp, winner of the 2010 School of Music Concerto Competition.

And they'll start with perhaps the coolest piece of all, Peter Maxwell Davies' *Orkney Wedding and Sunrise*, from 1984. A native of Manchester who moved to the Orkney Islands north of Scotland, Davies wrote the piece as a sort of musical picture postcard of the events of the title, starting with the arrival of the guests, moving through the dancing and the drinking, and culminating with one of the great sunrises in all music: a bagpiper—here, the magnificently named D. Gregor MacGregor III—playing full tilt while the orchestra blazes behind him. For listeners who've had enough of Hallelujahs and Sugar Plum Fairies for the season, it'll be just the thing.

—James Leonard

North Campus) begins at 9:30 a.m. Music books available (\$15). Bring a lunch. Hats, gloves, and sunglasses recommended. 2-3 p.m., U-M Diag. \$7. Free to spectators. 395-9544.

Holiday Hometown Concert: Saline Fiddlers Re-Strung. This local touring teen fiddle ensemble plays traditional American fiddle songs, bluegrass, and high-energy American folk. Tonight they celebrate the release of their new CD, *Heroes*, that features the audience favorite "Tall Buildings." Opening acts are the Saline 6th grade and middle school fiddle clubs and members of the Saline High School Choir and the Saline High School Band. Proceeds benefit the Saline Fire Department's Toys for Tots program. 2 p.m., Saline High School Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center, 1300 Campus Dr., Saline. \$10 (students & seniors, \$5). 994-2283.

132nd Annual "Messiah": University Choral Union (University Musical Society). See 4 Saturday, 2 p.m.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday, 2 p.m.

"To Kill a Mockingbird": Ann Arbor Civic Theatre. See 2 Thursday, 2 p.m.

"Little Shop of Horrors": Community High School Ensemble Theater. See 3 Friday, 2 p.m.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday, 2 p.m.

Amazin' Blue: U-M University Activities Center. The oldest U-M coed a cappella ensemble performs a mix of jazz, pop, and country songs, from Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues" to Coldplay's "Lovers in Japan" and Kanye West's "Flashing Lights."

2:30 p.m., Rackham Auditorium. \$12 (students, \$7) in advance at the Michigan Union Ticket Office, and at the door. 763-TKTS.

"The Nutcracker": Ypsilanti Area Dancers. See 4 Saturday, 3 p.m.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday, 3 p.m.

"Pippi Longstocking": EMU Theater Department. See 3 Friday, 3 p.m.

★"Hanukkah Kids Event": Borders. All kids ages 3-9 invited for holiday stories, games, songs, and more. 3 p.m., Downtown Borders (612 E. Liberty), Arborland Borders (3527 Washtenaw), & Waters Place Borders (3140 Lohr Rd.). Free. 668-7652 (Downtown), 677-6948 (Arborland), 997-8884 (Waters Place).

★Pokemon League: Get Your Game On. Every Sun. All invited to play this popular card game and trade cards with other players. 3 p.m., Get Your Game On, 709 Packard. Free. 786-3746.

★Robert Peavler and Alissa Deeter: EMU Music Department. Joint recital by baritone Peavler, an EMU music professor, and soprano Deeter, a University of North Carolina-Charlotte music professor. Program TBA. 3 p.m., EMU Pease Auditorium, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

"I Can Get It For You Wholesale": Chaverim B'Shirim. This local Jewish choir performs songs from this Harold Rome musical that introduced Barbra Streisand to Broadway in 1962. Refreshments. 3 p.m., Jewish Community Center, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr. (off Stone School Rd. south of Packard). Donation. 663-1978, 971-0990.

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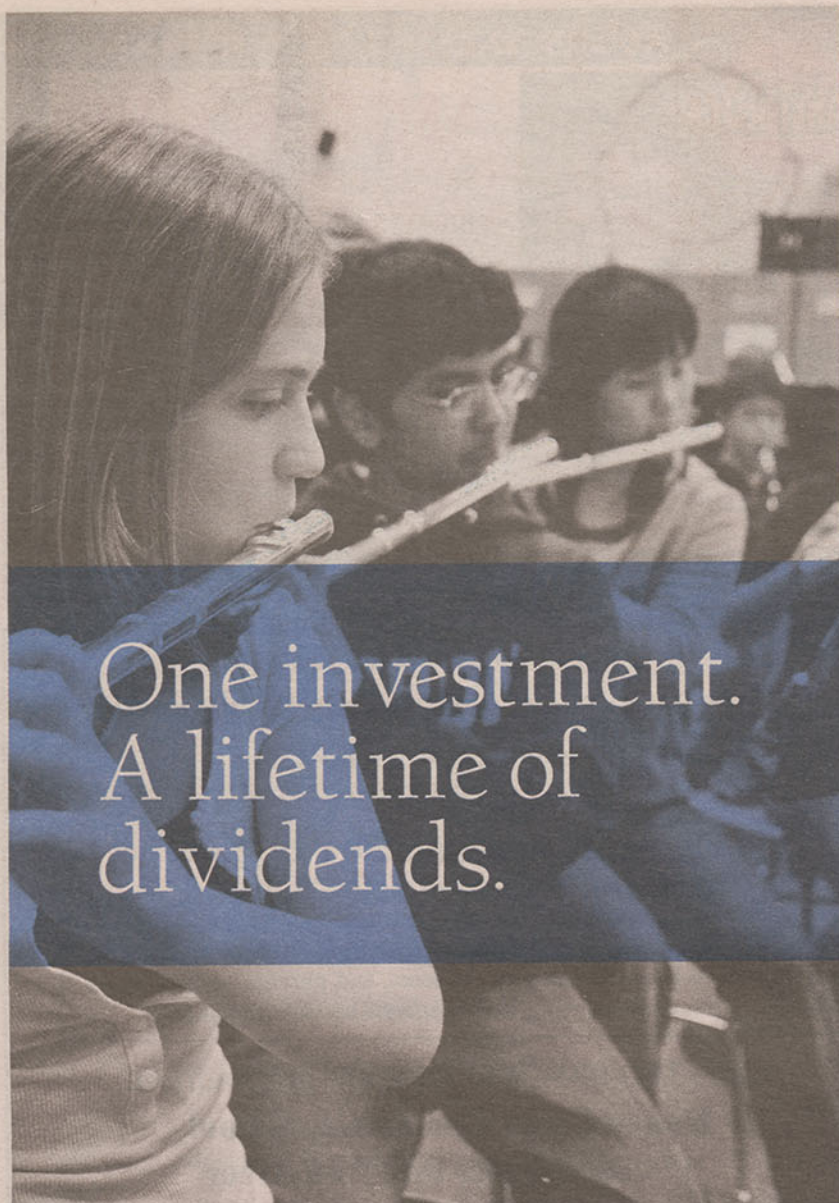
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"John E. Claus Is Coming Town": Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra Holiday Concert. This volunteer community orchestra directed by Adam Riccinto is joined by local jazz guitarist John E. Lawrence and the WCC Jazz Ensemble for a program of cool jazz and symphonic pops. 3:30 p.m., WCC Morris Lawrence Bldg. Towsley Auditorium, 4800 E. Huron River Dr. \$10 (seniors & kids under age 12, \$5; family of up to 2 adults & 2 kids under age 12, \$25) in advance at ypsilantisymphony.org and at the door. 507-1451.

Children's Puppet Shows: Dreamland Theater. Every Sun. The Dreamland Puppet Troupe presents marionette and shadow puppet shows for kids. 3:30 p.m., Dreamland Theater, 26 N. Washington, Ypsilanti. \$5 (kids age 3 & under, free). 657-2337.

***Ronni Sanlo: Common Language Bookstore.** This UCLA LGBT center director reads from *The Purple Golf Cart: Stories of an Unconventional Grandma*, her memoir about losing custody of her children after coming out in 1979. Signing & reception. 4 p.m., Common Language, Braun Ct. Free. 663-0036.

Annual Winter Concert: Ann Arbor Youth Chorus. Ensembles of talented local young singers perform works TBA. 4 p.m., Bethlehem United Church of Christ, 423 S. Fourth Ave. Tickets \$10 (students, seniors, & kids; \$5) at the door only. 996-4404.

33rd Annual Boar's Head Festival: Concordia University. See 3 Friday. 4 p.m.

***"Color and Fire: Defining Moments in Studio Ceramics, 1950-2000": Yourist Studio Gallery.** Screening of this video about works in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. 5 p.m., Yourist Studio Gallery, 1133 Broadway. Free. 662-4914.

"14th Annual Evening of Dinner & Jazz": African American Cultural & Historical Museum Fund-Raiser. Buffet dinner with live jazz by Ron Brooks & Friends, an ensemble led by veteran local bassist (and former Bird of Paradise owner) Brooks and featuring Betty Joplin, a silky-voiced jazz singer from Lansing with a vocal style somewhere between Aretha Franklin and Natalie Cole and a repertoire that blends Sarah Vaughan and Nancy Wilson. Cash bar. 5-8 p.m., Polo Fields Golf and Country Club, 2955 Packard. Tickets \$50 in advance at aachmuseum.org. 971-7819.

***"Advent Antiphons": St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.** Deborah Friauff directs the church's adult choir in contemporary American liturgical composer Peter Hallock's setting of the Advent chants known as the "O" Antiphons because each features a traditional text beginning with the word "O," the best known of which is "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." 7:15 p.m., St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 306 N. Division. Free. 663-0518.

Ballroom Dance Club at the U-M. Every Sun. except Dec. 26. Ballroom dancing to recorded music, including fox-trots, waltzes, cha-chas, rumbas, tangos, swing, and more. No partner necessary. Preceded at 7 p.m. by beginning lessons and practice. 8-10 p.m., Michigan Union Ballroom. \$5. 763-6984.

Fireside Festival of New Works: Performance Network. Dec. 5-8. A new play by a different Michigan playwright each night. 8 p.m., Performance Network, 120 E. Huron. \$10 suggested donation, or whatever you can afford to pay. 663-0681.

6 MONDAY

***"Playgroups for Babies": Ann Arbor District Library.** Every Mon. through Dec. 13. Play group for kids up to 24 months, accompanied by an adult. No older siblings. Note: Play groups are also offered (through the week of Dec. 13) at the Malletts Creek (Tues., 10-11 a.m., & Thurs., 6:30-7:30 p.m.), Pittsfield (Wed., 11 a.m.-noon), and Traverwood (Fri., 10:30-11:30 a.m.) branches. 10:30-11:30 a.m., AADL, 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-8301 (main library), 327-4200 (branches).

***Movie Matinee: Ann Arbor Senior Center.** Every Mon. Screening of a film TBA. Lunch available (\$2.50), 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 12:45 p.m., Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin. Free. 794-6250.

***"And Then a Hero Comes Along: Istanbulite Armenian Refashioning Turkishness, 1918-1923": U-M Armenian Studies Program.** Talk by U-M Armenian studies research fellow Lerna Ekmekecioglu. 4-5:30 p.m., 1636 SSWB, 1080 South University. Free. 647-2743.

***"Valences of Arabness in/and America: Artistic Representation of the Individual and the Collective": U-M Center for Near Eastern Studies.** Lecture by U-M Arabic languages professor Carol Bardenstein. 4 p.m., 202 S. Thayer. Free. 764-0314.

***Health Talks: Washtenaw Whole Foods Market.** Dec. 6, 15, 16, & 20. Talks by local chiropractors on "Avoiding Drugs and Surgery" (Dec. 6), "Healthy Gut, Healthy Body" (Dec. 15), "Iodine & Your Thyroid" (Dec. 16), & "Dining Out" (Dec. 20). 7 p.m., Whole Foods Cooking & Lifestyles Classroom,

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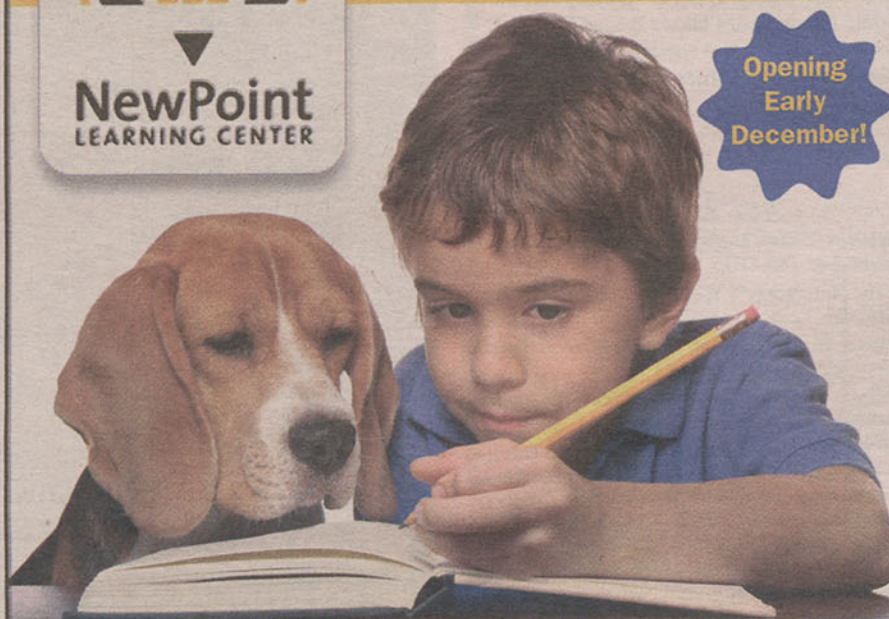
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3135 Washtenaw. Free. Preregistration required. 975-4500.

★**Jaimy Gordon: Nicola's Books.** This WMU English professor reads from her new novel *Lord of Misrule*, a National Book Award finalist. Set in the early 1970s, it is about a luminous young woman with a tragic attraction to horse racing and the seamy underworld of a West Virginia racetrack. Signing. 7 p.m., Nicola's, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 662-0600.

★**Large Ensemble Meeting: Ann Arbor Recorder Society.** All beginning and advanced players of the recorder and other early instruments invited. Directed by local flutist Tim Tikker. Music provided; bring your own music stand. 7:30-9:30 p.m., St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 306 N. Division. Free to visitors (\$30 annual dues for those who join). 213-3172.

★**Tartan & Thistle Scottish Country Dancers.** Dec. 6, 13, & 20. Jigs, reels, and strathspeys to live music. All dances taught. No partner needed. 7:30-9:30 p.m., Gretchen's House V, 2625 Traver. \$5. 395-7782, 426-0241.

★**"All Community Messiah Sing": Saline Area Schools.** All invited to join the Saline High School Choirs and members of the EMU Choral Department in a performance of Handel's *Messiah*. Check-in begins 6 p.m. Rehearsal begins 6:30 p.m. 8 p.m., Saline High Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center, 1300 Campus Pkwy., Saline. \$5 for singers. Free to listen, but donations accepted. 429-8000, ext. 2267.

★**U-M Symphony Band: U-M School of Music.** Michael Haitcock directs this music student ensemble in Stravinsky's Concerto for Piano and Winds, with pianist Jonathan Cook. Also, U-M music professor emeritus Theodore Morrison's *Wind Overture*, Ingolf Dahl's *Sinfonietta*, Kevin Puts's *Millennium Cannons*, and Dan Welcher's *Shaker Life Symphony*. 8 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Free. 764-0594.

★**Baroque Chamber Orchestra: U-M School of Music.** Aaron Berofsky and Edward Parmentier direct this music student ensemble in works by Handel, Telemann, Corelli, and Geminiani. 8 p.m., U-M Music School Britton Recital Hall, 1100 Baits Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. 764-0594.

★**Fireside Festival of New Works: Performance Network.** See 5 Sunday. 8 p.m.

★**Pub Quiz: Conor O'Neill's Irish Pub.** Every Mon. Local high school English teacher Geoff Cost throws out questions for anyone to answer at this popular weekly trivia fest. Prizes. 8:30-11:30 p.m., Conor O'Neill's, 318 S. Main. \$5 team fee. 665-2968.

7 TUESDAY

★**Social Bridge: Ann Arbor Senior Center.** Every Tues. All seniors age 50 & over invited to play bridge. No partner required. 9:30 a.m.-noon, Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin. Free. 794-6250.

★**Jewish Older Adults: Jewish Community Center.** Every Tues. Activities begin at 11 a.m. with "Energy Exercise" (\$4), a 60-minute workout led by Maria Farquhar, and at 1 p.m. mah-jongg, bridge, and other card games, board games, Wii sports, and quilting and other craft projects. Also, at 1:30 p.m., Yiddish Tish, a Yiddish conversation group. Homemade buffet luncheon (\$3) available at noon. All invited. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr. (off Stone School Rd. south of Packard). Free (except as noted). 971-0990.

★**Brown Bag Lecture: U-M Institute for the Humanities.** Dec. 7 & 14. Bring a bag lunch. Dec. 7: U-M Slavic languages & literature grad student Yana Arnold discusses "The Shakespearean Circle: Lawyers, Literary Criticism, and Professional Self-Fashioning in Late Imperial Russia." Dec. 14: University of Chicago history professor Tara Zahra on "Children as Spoils of War: Displaced Children, Ethnic Cleansing, and International Humanitarianism in 20th-Century Europe." Noon-1:30 p.m., 202 S. Thayer, room 2022. Free. 936-3518.

★**"Sarmatian Mirrors and 'Han' Ingots (100 BC-AD 100): How the Foreign Became Local and Vice Versa": U-M Center for Chinese Studies Noon Lecture Series.** Talk by University of Toronto archaeology professor Alice Yao. Free sandwiches, cookies, & coffee served. Noon-1 p.m., 1636 SSWB, 1080 South University. Free. 764-6308.

★**"Photography, Innovation, and the Lower East Side": U-M Frankel Center for Judaic Studies.** Panel discussion on the current Frankel Center exhibit. 1-2:30 p.m., U-M Alumni Center, 200 Fletcher. Free. 763-9047.

★**"Stitch": Crazy Wisdom Bookstore & Tea Room Craft Night.** All invited for socializing while working on their knitting, embroidery, stitching, or crochet projects. Cookies & hot tea (\$3.75 includes refills). 6:30-8:30 p.m., Crazy Wisdom, 114 S. Main. Free. 665-2757.

★**"Knit Happens": Ann Arbor Stitch 'n' Bitch.** Every Tues. All knitters invited to work on their proj-

ects and swap knitting tips. 6:30-8:30 p.m., location TBA. Free. 945-3035.

★**Common Thread Knitters Club.** Dec. 7 & 21. All knitters invited to meet members of this local knitting group and exchange tips. 7 p.m., Arborland Borders, 3527 Washtenaw. Free. 677-6948.

★**Ann Arbor Area Writers Group.** Every Tues. All local writers invited to bring samples of their writing to read and discuss. Observers welcome. 7-9 p.m., Arborland Borders, 3527 Washtenaw. Free. 665-8194.

★**Bill Brown: Downtown Borders.** This former *Michigan Daily*, *Ann Arbor News*, and *Metro Times* music writer reads from and discusses *You Should've Heard Just What I Seen*, a collection of his newspaper articles from 1981-1984. Brown also plays recordings by Ann Arbor-based musicians mentioned in the book. Signing. 7 p.m., Borders, 612 E. Liberty. Free. 668-7652.

★**Thomas Lynch: Nicola's Books.** See review, p. 54. This internationally acclaimed poet and essayist reads from his new poetry collection *Walking Papers*. Lynch, who works as a funeral director in his hometown of Milford, is known for muscular, vigorously figured lyrical poems on personal and mythological themes that are sometimes tender and elegiac but often very funny or harrowingly bitter, or both. Signing. 7 p.m., Nicola's, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 662-0600.

★**"Lost Eagles: One Man's Mission to Find Missing Airmen in Two World Wars": U-M Press Author Series.** Virginia-based writer Blaine Pardoe discusses his book about Fred Zinn, an Air Force pilot who grew up in Michigan and created the techniques still used to determine the final fate of pilots missing in action. Signing. 7-8:30 p.m., 100 Hatcher Graduate Library, enter from the Diag. Free. 615-6477.

★**Herb David Guitar Studio Showcase: Ann Arbor District Library.** Performance by Herb David teachers, including jazz guitarist Carl Michel, rock guitarists Sean Rogers and Eric Wickenheiser, classical guitarist Helene Rottenberg, and Al Davenport, who plays 5-string banjo, guitar, and ukulele. 7-8:30 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

★**English Country Dancing: Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance.** Dec. 7, 14, & 21. Historical and traditional English dancing to live music. All dances taught. No partner or experience needed. Bring flat, nonslip shoes (running shoes OK). First-timers are asked to arrive at 7 p.m. 7-9:30 p.m., Chapel Hill Condominium clubhouse, 3350 Green Rd. (park on Burbank). \$7 (students; \$4; kids age 13 & under with a parent, free). 665-7704.

★**Spanish Readers Group: Nicola's Books.** All invited to join a discussion, in Spanish, of *El Arte de la Resurreccion*, Hernan Rivera Letelier's novel about a Chilean wanderer who believes he's Jesus Christ. 7:30 p.m., Nicola's, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 662-0600.

★**Ann Arbor Camera Club.** Club members show their recent slides and prints, including those on the club's current topic, "Waterfalls." 7:30 p.m., Forsythe Middle School Media Center, 1655 Newport. Free to visitors (\$25 annual dues for those who join). 327-4781.

★**University Choir: U-M School of Music.** Paul Rardin conducts this music student ensemble in Poulenc's celebrated 1959 choral symphony *Gloria*, a work it also performs with the University Philharmonia on Dec. 13 (see listing). Also, Javier Bustos's "Pater Noster," Pierre Villette's "Jesu, dulcis memoria," and Hugo Distler's "Singet frisch und wohlgebet." 8 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Free. 764-0594.

★**"Schumann Festival": Mad About Chamber Music.** Dec. 7, 9, & 15 (different programs). With U-M music students and faculty. Proceeds benefit a local charity TBA. Tonight: U-M students perform Schumann's 3 violin sonatas. 8 p.m., Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave. Donation. 769-2999.

★**Fireside Festival of New Works: Performance Network.** See 5 Sunday. 8 p.m.

8 WEDNESDAY

★**Holiday Bazaar: University Living Cultural Center.** With works by local artists. 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m., University Living, 2865 S. Main. Free admission. 669-3030, ext. 233.

★**"Group Drumming: Music for the Health of It": U-M Turner Geriatrics Center.** All seniors invited to join music and health consultant Dianne Baker for drumming and singing. Drums provided. 1:30-2:30 p.m., Turner Senior Resource Center, 2401 Plymouth Rd. Free. 998-9353.

★**Rami Khouri: U-M Ford School of Public Policy International Policy Center.** Lecture by this *Daily Star* (Beirut) editor-at-large, also director of the American University of Beirut Institute of Public Policy and International Affairs. 4-5:30 p.m., 1120 Weill Hall, 735 S. State at Hill. Free. 615-3893.

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★“Linocut Printing”: Ann Arbor District Library. Adults and kids in grade 6 & up invited to design, cut, and print their own lino square using linoleum blocks. Materials and tools provided. 6:30–8:30 p.m., AADL Pittsfield Branch, 2359 Oak Valley Dr. between Scio Church Rd. and Ann Arbor–Saline Rd. Free. 327-4555.

★“Wine & Oyster Dinner”: Zingerman’s Roadhouse. Zingerman’s Roadhouse chef Alex Young is joined by Qupe Wine Cellars (Los Olivos, CA) owner Robert Lindquist to host a dinner of 4 courses pairing oyster dishes with Qupe’s chardonnay and Rhone varietals. 7 p.m., Zingerman’s Roadhouse, 2501 Jackson Rd. \$85. Beverages available a la carte. Space limited; reservations required. 663-FOOD.

★MiRobotClub. All invited to meet robotics hobbyists and check out and discuss their current gadgets and toys. 7 p.m., A2 Mech Shop, 240 Parkland Plaza (off eastbound Jackson between Wagner & Zeeb). Free. (517) 618-9546.

★“Sensors and the Self: Better Living Through Personal Informatics”: Ann Arbor District Library. Talk by U-M School of Information computer research specialist Erik Hofer. 7–8:30 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

★D.L. Line: Common Language Bookstore. This Virginia writer reads from *Head Trip*, her new novel set in 2039 Chicago about a virtual travel service that allows people to experience any place and time. Signing & reception. 7 p.m., Common Language, Braun Ct. Free. 663-0036.

★Channeled Spiritual Discussion Group: Deep Spring Center. All invited to share their spiritual and metaphysical questions with others with similar interests. The evening is led by Aaron, a “being of light” channeled by Barbara Brodsky. Aaron shares Christmas stories. Also, socializing. 7:30–9:30 p.m., Deep Spring Center, 3003 Washtenaw, Suite 2 (next to Arby’s; entry on Glenwood). Free, but donations are accepted. 477-5848.

★Holiday Party: Mothers & More. All moms invited. Bring a snack or drink to share. Door prizes. 8–10 p.m., Gladwin Place, 4105 W. Liberty. Free. 527-6880.

★Concert Band: U-M School of Music. Rodney Dorsey conducts this music student ensemble in Hindemith’s popular Symphony in B-flat. Also, U-M grad student David Biedenbender’s *Stomp*, Bryant’s *The Logic of All My Dreams*, Ticheli’s *Angles in the Architecture*, Nelson’s *Aspen Jubilee*, and Ricker’s arrangement of Sweelinck’s Variations on “Meines Junges Leben hat ein End.” 8 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Free. 764-0594.

★U-M Chamber Choir: U-M School of Music. Jerry Blackstone conducts this music student ensemble in Persichetti’s a cappella Mass. Also, Tarik O’Regan’s *Triptych*, the premiere of a 3-movement choral work by U-M grad student David Biedenbender, and holiday music. 8 p.m., U-M Walgreen Drama Center Stamps Auditorium, 1226 Murfin, North Campus. 764-0594.

★“Die Juedische Frau”: U-M Residential College. RC German language lecturer Janet Hegman Shier directs RC student Kaela Parnicky in “The Jewish Wife,” a celebrated 30-minute scene from Bertolt Brecht’s 1938 anti-Nazi play *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (also known as *The Private Life of the Master Race*). In this scene a Jewish woman agonizes about how to tell her husband she is leaving him to save his career at a clinic. German, English subtitles. 8 p.m., RC Keene Auditorium, East Quad, 701 East University. Free. 647-4378.

★“Best of Friends”: Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 3 & 8 p.m.

★Fireside Festival of New Works: Performance Network. See 5 Sunday. 8 p.m.

★“Comedy Jamm”: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

9 THURSDAY

★“The Firebird”: Wild Swan Theater. Dec. 9, 10, & 12. This award-winning local children’s theater presents Russia’s most famous folktale, with dancing and music. In the course of a perilous journey to recover the elusive Firebird and save his family’s kingdom, young Prince Ivan must overcome the horrible witch Baba Yaga, Nurl the Gnome, Sischik the Snake King, and the ogre Koschey the Deathless. Live bala-laika music by local musicians David Mosher and Nan Nelson. Suitable for kids ages 4 & over. As with all Wild Swan productions, the performance is interpreted in American Sign Language. Audio description and backstage “touch” tours are available by prearrangement for blind audience members. 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m., WCC Morris Lawrence Bldg. Towsley Auditorium, 4800 E. Huron River Dr. Tickets \$15 (kids, \$10) in advance at wildswantheater.org and by phone, and at the door. 995-0530.



Ivan battles the horrible witch
Baba Yaga in Wild Swan Theater’s
production of *The Firebird*
December 9, 10, & 12.

Advent Noon Recital: First Presbyterian Church. See 2 Thursday. Today: Carol Muehlig conducts the church’s Gloria Handbell Choir in Christmas music. 12:15–12:45 p.m.

★“Tea with the Fairies”: Crazy Wisdom Bookstore & Tea Room. Crazy Wisdom staff dress up as fairies to sprinkle fairy dust and serve tea, petits fours, and cookies to kids and their families. Also, fairy stories and readings. Bring your own fairy wings and dolls. 1 & 4 p.m., Crazy Wisdom, 114 S. Main. \$10.50 (babies age 18 months & younger, free). Preregistration required. 665-2757.

★“Flower Arranging”: Ikebana International Chapter 183. Sogetsu Ikebana expert Jayne Depotter leads a session of Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement. Call for instructions on equipment to bring. Depotter also shows and sells her jewelry. 1 p.m., University Commons, 817 Asa Gray Dr. (off Huron Pkwy.). \$15 (members, \$8) materials fee. (248) 685-7696.

★“Holiday Gift Fair”: Zingerman’s Delicatessen. 4–7:30 p.m., Zingerman’s Next Door (upstairs), 422 Detroit St. Free admission. 663-3354.

★“How to Prepare the Perfect Rib Roast for Your Holiday Dinner”: Cranbrook Whole Foods Market. Demonstration by a Whole Foods staffer. 6 p.m., Cranbrook Whole Foods Market, 990 W. Eisenhower Pkwy., Cranbrook Village. \$10. 997-7500.

★“The Twelve Days of Christmas in Michigan”: Nicola’s Books. Illustrator Deb Pilutti and writer Susan Collins Thoms read from their children’s book about a girl who travels with her cousin around Michigan, taking horse-drawn sleigh rides, visiting the Motor City, playing hockey, and touring lighthouses. Signing. 6:30 p.m., Nicola’s, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 662-0600.

★Scandinavian Christmas Celebration: Ann Arbor Scandinavian Club. This family-oriented party features folk singing, a Lucia train (a Swedish children’s pageant), and other activities. Santa Claus is on hand. Bring a dish to share for a potluck (A–H: dessert; I–R: meat, cold cuts, or herring; S–Z: bread, cheese, or salad), and a Santa gift for your child. Smorgasbord with glogg (a spiced seasonal fruit-and-wine beverage). Open to anyone interested in Scandinavian culture. 6:30–9 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W. Liberty. \$5 (family, \$10). johannae@umich.edu.

★Team USA Under-17 vs. Cedar Rapids. The younger of the 2 Ann Arbor-based USA Hockey national development teams plays this U.S. Hockey League rival. Team USA Under-17 also has a match this month against Indiana (Dec. 12), and Team USA Under-18 has USHL matches against Cedar Rapids (Dec. 10) and Chicago (Dec. 11). 7 p.m. (Dec. 9–11) & 3 p.m. (Dec. 12), Ann Arbor Ice Cube, 2121 Oak Valley Dr. at Scio Church Rd. \$12 (seniors, students, & children, \$6; kids under 5, free). 327-9251.

★“Holiday Specialties”: Arbor Brewing Company Beer Tasting. A chance to sample and learn about some 2 dozen different spiced beers, old ales, meads, and other holiday favorites. Also, a drawing for beer-related prizes. The price of admission includes unlimited beer sampling and a German appetizer buffet. 7–9 p.m., Arbor Brewing Company, 114 E. Washington. Tickets \$25 in advance, \$30 (if available) at the door. 213-1393.

★Upper School Orchestra and Choir Concert: Greenhills School. Ben Cohen directs the choirs in a wide range of choral music. The program ends with

the annual, rollicking "Wassail" and the Hanukkah hymn "Hanerot Halalu." 7-9 p.m., *Greenhills School Campbell Center for the Performing Arts*, 850 Greenhills Dr. (off Earhart). Free. 205-4091.

"Bells Ringing! People Singing!": Calvary Presbyterian Church. Local musicians and singers perform Christmas music. The program is highlighted by a performance by Flushing (MI) Christian singer Dan Hays. 7 p.m., *Calvary Presbyterian Church*, 2727 Fernwood. Free will offering. 971-3121.

Winter Concert: Kol Hakavod. This popular chorus, dubbed the "U-M's Jewish cappella sensation," sings a program of Jewish and secular songs. 7 p.m., *U-M Hillel*, 1429 Hill St. \$7 (students, \$5). 769-0500.

"The Eight: Reindeer Monologues": U-M Basement Arts. Dec. 9-11. Emma Donson directs students in Jeff Goode's 1994 dark comedy about a sex scandal that erupts at the North Pole, painting a twisted picture of jolly old St. Nick. 7 p.m., *U-M Walgreen Drama Center Studio 1*, 1226 Murfin, North Campus. Free. basement.studentorgs.umich.edu.

"Pippi Longstocking": EMU Theater Department. See 3 Friday. 7 p.m.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 3 & 7 p.m.

Winter Orchestra Concert: Pioneer High School. Jonathan Glawe directs students in works TBA. 7:30 p.m., *Pioneer High School Schreiber Auditorium*, 601 W. Stadium Blvd. at Main. Free. 994-2120.

"Much Ado about Nothing": U-M Theatre Department. Dec. 9-12. U-M drama professor John Neville-Andrews directs U-M drama students in Shakespeare's high-spirited, sharp-tongued comedy about 2 pairs of young lovers. One couple, both disdainful of love, are tricked into acknowledging each other, while the other couple's love is nearly ruined by a deception that leads to trumped-up charges of infidelity. The play is best known for its charged sexual banter and for the penetrating wit and often dark cast of its humor. 7:30 p.m., *Power Center*. Tickets \$18 & \$24 (students, \$10) at the *Michigan League Box Office* in advance and at the door. To charge by phone, call 764-2538.

"Schumann Festival": Mad About Chamber Music. See 7 Tuesday. Tonight: U-M faculty—including violinists Aaron Berofsky and Kathryn Votapek, viola player Yizhak Schotten, cellist Richard Aaron, clarinetist Chad Burrow, and pianists Amy Cheng, Logan Skelton, and Christopher Harding—perform Schumann's Piano Quartet, Piano Quintet, and the *Maerchenerzaehlungen* ("Fairy Tales") for viola, clarinet, and piano. 8 p.m.

"Emails, Females, and Coattails": U-M Dance Department B.F.A. Concert. Dec. 9-11. An evening of original choreography by U-M dance majors Tara Sheena, Sadie Yarrington, and Emily Wanserski. Note: These shows often sell out very quickly. 8 p.m., *U-M Dance Bldg. Betty Pease Studio*, 1310 North University Ct. \$5 at the door only, beginning at 7 p.m. 763-5460, 763-5461.

"The Sorcerer": U-M Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Dec. 9-12. Mitch Gillett and Yaniv Segal direct Gilbert and Sullivan's early comic operetta about a happily married young couple who decide the world would be better if everyone could know their bliss. The husband enlists a sorcerer to create a love potion that's served up in a communal pot of tea. The inhabitants drink the tea, fall into an enchanted sleep, and awake to fall passionately in love with the first person they lay eyes upon. This results in a lot of uncomfortably comic mismatches, and in order to reverse the situation, the sorcerer must sacrifice himself—an unusual twist for the main comic figure in a G&S operetta. The score is probably best known for the patter song "My Name Is John Wellington Wells," a standard for G&S baritones. 8 p.m., *Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre*, 911 North University. Tickets \$20 (seniors age 65 & over, \$18; students with ID, \$10) in advance at brownpapertickets.com/event/128587 or by calling (800) 838-3006, and at the door. 647-8436.

"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions. Dec. 9-12 & 16-18. Jan Carpmann directs local actors in Alan Ayckbourn's trilogy of comedies, including fully staged performances of *Table Manners* (Dec. 9-11 & 16-18, 8 p.m., and Dec. 12, 2 p.m.) and partially staged concert readings of *Living Together* (Dec. 11, 2 p.m.) and *Round and Round the Garden* (Dec. 18, 2 p.m.). The 3 plays are dovetailed accounts of a weekend at an English country house, each set in a different part of the house, with some scenes overlapping or a character exit in one play corresponding to an entrance in another. Set in the dining room, *Table Manners* is about a woman stuck caring for her mother, but she wants to get away for the weekend to be with her sister's husband Norman, an amorous assistant librarian. In *Living Together* and *Round and Round the Garden*, Norman's exploits with the 3 sisters continue to unfold in the sitting room and garden, respectively. "Ayckbourn's

realm is...familiar: the domestic and romantic trials of modern middle-class Brits," says a *Time* magazine reviewer. "Yet no one has probed more acutely, or with a finer balance of laughter and pain, the sad human comedy behind these tidy surfaces." 8 p.m., *Riverside Arts Center*, 76 N. Huron, Ypsilanti. Tickets \$16 (students & seniors, \$11; Thurs., pay what you can; readings, \$10 each). 483-7345.

"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre. Dec. 9-12 & 16-18. Blackbird artistic director Barton Bund and longtime Blackbird actor William Myers present a series of holiday-themed monologues in the voices of Henry Miller, Dylan Thomas, Truman Capote, and Canadian novelist Roch Carrier. 8 p.m., *Shaul Cabaret & Gallery*, 325 Braun Ct. \$15-\$25 in advance at blackbirdtheatre.org and at the door. 332-3848.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

Nick Griffin: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Dec. 9-11. Ann Arbor debut of this veteran stand-up comic, a former regular on Comedy Central's *Premium Blend* known for his dark, pointed observational humor about contemporary life and mores. Preceded by 2 opening acts. Alcohol is served. 8 p.m., *314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant)*. \$8 (Thurs.) & \$11 (Fri. & Sat.) reserved seating in advance, \$10 (Thurs.) & \$13 (Fri. & Sat.) general admission at the door. 996-9080.

"Poetic Debauchery Poetry Slam": Krazy Kats. All poets invited to compete in a poetry slam judged by a randomly chosen panel from the audience. Cash prizes. The slam is preceded by a brief poetry open mike and a short set by *Full Dimensional*, a Detroit area garage trio that plays arty psychedelic rock. The band plays a full set after the slam. 9-11:30 p.m. (sign-up begins at 8:15 p.m.), *The Circus*, 210 S. First. Free. 985-0736.

10 FRIDAY

"The Firebird": Wild Swan Theater. See 9 Thursday. 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

"Words to Live By": Calvary Presbyterian Church. Dec. 10-12. A book fair with readings by Christian writers. Book sales, signings, refreshments, games, and more. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 10), 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (Dec. 11), & noon-4 p.m. (Dec. 12), *Calvary Presbyterian Church*, 2727 Fernwood. Free admission. 971-3121.

Maize 'n' Blue Intrasquad: U-M Men's Gymnastics. The U-M men's gymnastics team, the defending NCAA champion, prepares for the 2010-2011 season with an intrasquad meet. 7 p.m., *Cliff Keen Arena*, S. State at Hoover. Free. 764-0247.

Crazy Wisdom Reading Circle: Crazy Wisdom Bookstore & Tea Room. All invited to join a discussion of Matthew Edlund's *The Power of Rest: Why Sleep Alone Isn't Enough*. 7-9:30 p.m., *Crazy Wisdom*, 114 S. Main. Free. 665-2757.

"Festive Friday": Main Street Area Association. Dec. 10 & 17. Local entertainers stroll the sidewalks beneath trees twinkling with 100,000 Christmas lights, with many stores open late. Entertainment includes theater by *Center Stage Productions*, Elvis tribute artist *Chris Solano*, swordplay stunts by *Ring of Steel*, and jugglers *Ben Ruetenik* and *Joshua Dasen*. 7-9 p.m., *downtown area bounded by Main, Liberty, Washington, and Fourth Ave.* Free. 668-7112.

U-M Dicks & Jones. This coed cappella ensemble performs pop songs. Past performances have included everything from Rick Springfield's "Jessie's Girl" to Sufjan Stevens' "Chicago." 7 p.m., *MLB Auditorium 3*, 812 E. Washington. \$10 (students, \$5). dicksandjones@umich.edu.

A Cappella Concert: U-M Headnotes. This a cappella ensemble of law students performs 1970s through contemporary pop songs, including "Pinball Wizard" and songs by Rihanna, Carrie Underwood, and others. 7 p.m., *U-M Lawyer's Club Lounge*, 551 S. State. Free. umlsheadnotesboard@umich.edu.

"A Boychoir Christmas": Boychoir of Ann Arbor. Dec. 10 & 11 (different locations). Boychoir founder Tom Strode directs this local ensemble of boys ages 9-17 in its 24th annual Christmas concert. The program opens with the processional "Once in royal David's city," with the 1st verse sung by a solo boy, and concludes with John Gardner's "Tomorrow shall be my dancing day." Also, Mack Wilberg's joyous setting of the Caribbean carol "The Virgin Mary had a baby boy," the popular Spanish Renaissance carol "Riu, riu chiu," Caldwell and Ivory's inspiring peace anthem "Hope for Resolution," which joins the plainchant melody of the hymn "of the Father's love begotten" with the Apartheid-era Zulu song "Thula sizwe." The treble voices are featured in Elizabeth Poston's renowned setting of the American folk hymn "Jesus Christ the Apple Tree" and the moving "Lullaby" from Vaughan Williams' *Hodie*. The Boychoir's



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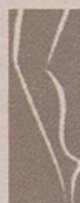
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Preparatory Choir for boys ages 7–10 also performs the American folk carol “Hallelu” and Handel’s soaring “Oh thou that taltest good tidings to Zion.” Audience sing-alongs of “Hark! The herald angels sing” and “O come, all ye faithful” are kicked off with a soaring Boychoir descant verse. This popular annual concert usually draws a full house, so get your tickets in advance. 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 300 N. Washington, Ypsilanti. Tickets \$15 (students & seniors, \$10; youths 17 & under, \$5; family, \$40) in advance at aabochoir.org and at the door. 663-5377.

“Pippi Longstocking”: EMU Theater Department. See 3 Friday. 7 p.m.

★“The Eight: Reindeer Monologues”: U-M Basement Arts. See 9 Thursday. 7 & 11 p.m.

★Older Lesbians Organizing. All lesbians invited to watch a DVD on lesbian humor. 7:30 p.m., WRAP Office (upstairs), 319 Braun Ct. Free. 995-9867.

Winter Concert: U-M Compulsive Lyres. This coed a cappella ensemble performs Top 40 hits as well as indie, alternative, and jazz songs. 7:30 p.m., East Hall Auditorium, 530 Church. \$10 (students, \$5) at the door only. compulsivelylyres.com

★“Julius Caesar”: Greenhills School. Benjamin Cohen directs Greenhills seniors in Shakespeare’s early tragedy exploring the savage ironies that shape political struggle and conflict. 7:30 p.m., Greenhills School Campbell Center for the Performing Arts, 850 Greenhills Dr. (off Earhart). Free. 769-4010.

★Michigan Mobile Phone Ensemble: U-M School of Music. Performing arts technology and electrical engineering and computer science students perform works they composed for reprogrammed cell phones. 8 p.m., U-M Music School Britton Recital Hall, 1100 Baites Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. 764-0594.

★Chamber Choir and University Choir: EMU Music Department. Trey Jacobs directs these 2 music student ensembles in “Adoration and Praise III,” an eclectic Mass drawn from a number of sources representing a variety of cultures and styles. Also, some gospel songs and spirituals. 8 p.m., EMU Pease Auditorium, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

★University Symphony Orchestra: U-M School of Music. See review, p. 57. Kenneth Kiesler conducts this music student ensemble in a program of music from the British Isles, including Peter Maxwell’s *An Orkney Wedding Sunrise*, Elgar’s *Enigma Variations*, and Britten’s setting of Rimbaud’s *Les Illuminations*, with tenor Kyle Knapp. 8 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Free. 764-0594.

Fall Concert: U-M Gimble. This coed a cappella ensemble performs everything from Simon & Garfunkel’s “Bridge Over Troubled Water” to Guster’s “Either Way.” Opening act is the Northwestern University a cappella ensemble *Freshman 15*. 8 p.m., Angell Hall Auditorium A. Cost TBA. umich.edu/~gimble

Michael Malis: Canterbury House. Performance by this local jazz and soul pianist. 8 p.m., Canterbury House, 721 E. Huron. \$10 (students & seniors, \$5). 764-3162.

Katie Geddes & Friends: Green Wood Coffee House Series (First United Methodist Church). An evening of acoustic music hosted by Geddes, a local folksinger who sings in a clear, strong voice. Her repertoire includes songs by everyone from Buffy Sainte-Marie and John Prine to Michael Nesmith and Lennon & McCartney, and her new CD *We Are Each Other’s Angels* has been getting airplay around the world. The lineup includes Massachusetts singer-songwriter Don White (see 3 Friday listing), veteran Detroit folksinger Matt Watroba, and All about Eve, the vocal trio of Geddes, Deb Wood, and Debra Gerber. They specialize in close-harmony pop, folk, and gospel tunes, some performed a cappella and some accompanied on guitar or piano. 8 p.m., FUMC Green Wood Church, 1001 Green Rd. at Glazier Way. \$15 (kids 10 & under, 2 for the price of 1) in advance and at the door. 662-4536, 665-8558.

“Weekend with Brad Foster”: Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. Dec. 10–12. Three days of dancing to caller Foster, the Country Dance & Song Society (Amherst, MA) executive director. Tonight: contras, squares, and a few English country dances to live music by Debbie Jackson & Friends. 8–11 p.m., AACTMAD Concourse Hall, 4531 Concourse Dr. (off S. State across from the airport). \$10. 747-8138.

“Emails, Females, and Coattails”: U-M Dance Department B.F.A. Concert. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

“The Sorcerer”: U-M Gilbert and Sullivan Society. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

“It’s a Wonderful Life”: Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

“The Drowsy Chaperone”: Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

“Best of Friends”: Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"Much Ado about Nothing": U-M Theatre Department. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Nick Griffin: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 9 Thursday. 8 & 10:30 p.m.

II SATURDAY

"17th Annual Cookie Walk": First United Methodist Church. Sale of homemade cookies, including decorated sugar cookies, Russian teacakes, snicker doodles, peanut blossoms, and more. Proceeds benefit church missions. 9 a.m. until sold out (often before 11 a.m.). FUMC, 120 S. State at Huron. Free admission. 662-2745.

Huron Gun Collectors. Dec. 11 & 12. About 100 dealers and collectors offer guns, knives, ammunition, and other hunting equipment for sale, including antiques and collectibles. Concessions. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (Sat.) & 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (Sun.). Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Admission \$4. (517) 605-0624.

Children of the Earth Club: Leslie Science and Nature Center. All kids in grades 2 & above invited to join local singer-songwriter and environmental educator Joe Reilly in nature songs and environmentally themed games and outdoor activities. 9:30-11:30 a.m., Leslie Science Center, 1831 Traver Rd. \$8 per child. 997-1533.

"Physics Day of Celebration": U-M Physics Department. This day of physics activities and demos is highlighted by a lecture by Nobel Prize-winning physicist Samuel C.C. Ting (10:30 a.m.), outdoor games and refreshments (noon), and a lecture by U-M physics professors Brad Orr and David Winn on "We Own Frictionless Surfaces: The Physics of Hockey" (1:30 p.m.) to whet your appetite for a simulcast of the Big Chill U-M/MSU hockey game at 3 p.m. (see below). 9:45-3 p.m., 1800 Chemistry Bldg. (9:45 a.m.-noon), 930 North University & 170 Dennison (noon-3 p.m.), 500 Church. Free. 763-2588.

"Paper Making": Ann Arbor Solid Waste Department. All invited to make a colorful sheet of recycled paper using torn paper, water, and everyday household supplies. Also, display of "tree-free" papers. Followed by guided tours of the city's recycling and trash processing center. 10 a.m.-noon, Materials Recovery Facility, 4120 Platt Rd. Free. 994-2807.

"Mini Makers": Blue House Ann Arbor. Dec. 11 & 19. All kids from preschoolers through 1st graders (Dec. 11) and ages 8-12 (Dec. 19) invited to make crafts. 10-11:30 a.m. (Dec. 11) & 10 a.m.-noon (Dec. 19), Blue House, 1026 S. Main. \$15 (Dec. 11) & \$20 (Dec. 19). Preregistration required. 780-1762.

Holiday Sale: Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library. Dec. 11 & 12. Books, children's books, games, puzzles, and curiosities. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Dec. 11) & 1-4 p.m. (Dec. 12), AADL lower level, 343 S. Fifth. Free admission. 302-7774.

"Local Arts & Crafts Fair": The Tiny Expo. Sale of holiday gifts by local artists and crafters. 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Braun Ct. Free admission. 678-7976.

"Holiday Greens": Ann Arbor Garden Club. Club members help participants make a take-home wreath. Bring a vase if you wish to create an arrangement instead. Followed by a potluck. 10 a.m.-noon, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd. \$15 materials fee. Reservations required. 665-7072.

5th Annual Holiday Studio Sale. Dec. 11 & 12. Sale of porcelain and earthenware ceramics, jewelry, handmade books, wearables, and more by 5 local artists. Noon-5 p.m., 627 Gott St. (off Miller). Free admission. 327-3727, 668-7436.

"Art on Adare." A holiday sale of jewelry, fiber, and glass by Idelle Hammond-Sass, Carol Furtado, and Annette Baron. Noon-6 p.m., 1510 Kearney at Adare (off Melrose, off Tuomey, off Washtenaw). Free admission. 741-4441.

"Professor Ray's Everyday Science": Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum. Dec. 11, 12, 18, & 19. Museum staffers give family-friendly science demos. Dec. 11 & 12: "Chem Mystery" offers experiments using everyday items to create chemical reactions. Dec. 18 & 19: "Air Apparent" includes experiments with air pressure, from crushing a can to levitating objects. 1 & 3 p.m., AAHOM, 220 E. Ann. \$9 regular admission (members & infants, free). 995-5439.

"Christmas on the Farm": Saline Area Historical Society. Dec. 11 & 12. A re-creation of a Depression-era Christmas, with a fresh-cut Christmas tree and old-fashioned toys. Also, docent-guided tours of the house, a display of Christmas cards, demos of a sock knitting machine, and more. Christmas cookies and other refreshments. 1-5 p.m., Rentschler Farm Museum, 1265 E. Michigan, Saline. \$1 (kids, free). 769-2219.

"Weekend with Brad Foster": Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. See 10 Friday. Today: English country dancing to music by Childgrove. Also, a potluck (4:30 p.m.). 1:30-4:30 p.m. & 8-11 p.m., AACTMAD Concourse Hall, 4531 Concourse Dr. (off S. State across from the airport). \$10 (1:30 p.m.) & \$15 (8 p.m.). 747-8138.

***Loren Estleman: Aunt Agatha's.** This award-winning local author of more than 50 crime novels and westerns discusses *The Left-Handed Dollar*, the latest mystery in his popular and critically acclaimed series featuring the exploits of the hard-boiled Detroit private eye Amos Walker. Also, William Whitbeck discusses his 1st book, *To Account for Murder*, a fictionalized retelling of the 1945 gangland murder of Michigan state senator Warren G. Hooper. Signings. Holiday treats. 2 p.m., Aunt Agatha's, 213 S. Fourth Ave. Free. 769-1114.

U-M Ice Hockey vs. MSU. This game has been dubbed "The Big Chill at the Big House." 3 p.m., Michigan Stadium. \$20-\$24. 764-0247.

***Family Fun: Oz's Music Environment.** Dec. 11 & 18. Families invited to get onstage to sing and make music on a variety of instruments. 3-4 p.m., Oz's, 1920 Packard. \$15 per family. 662-8283.

***"Youth Orchestra Concert":** Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts. The school's Junior String Orchestra, Sterling String Orchestra, and Youth Symphony Orchestra perform a family-friendly program of works by Mozart, Grainger, and Saint-Saens. 3 p.m., Michigan Theater. Free. 213-2000.

"A Boychoir Christmas": Boychoir of Ann Arbor. See 10 Friday. 3 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 1432 Washtenaw.

***Early Music Ensemble:** U-M School of Music. Edward Parmentier directs this music student ensemble in choral works by Bach, Byrd, J.H. Schein, and Gabrieli, and chamber works by Frescobaldi, Couperin, Purcell, Bach, and Handel. 4 p.m., U-M Music School Blanche Anderson Moore Recital Hall, 1100 Baitz Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

"Sing Along with Santa": Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra. This popular annual family concert features a carol sing-along led by former orchestra staff member Charley Sullivan as Santa. Musicians include the Rudolf Steiner School Steel Drum Band, A2SO violinist Barbara Sturgis-Everett, and pianist Lori Zupan. Santa also reads 'Twas the Night Before Christmas. Followed by cookies, apple cider, and photos with Santa. 4 p.m., Bethlehem United Church of Christ, 423 S. Fourth Ave. Tickets \$10 (families up to 6 members, \$35) in advance at the AASO office (220 E. Huron suite 470) and a2so.com, and (if available) at the door. 994-4801.

"Holiday Harmony": Voices in Harmony/Huron Valley Harmonizers. Voices in Harmony, a local Sweet Adelines women's chorus, and the Harmonizers, a local men's barbershop chorus, join forces for a program of a cappella holiday music. Also, performances by some of each chorus's quartets. 4 p.m., WCC Morris Lawrence Bldg. Towsley Auditorium, 4800 E. Huron River Dr. Tickets \$15 (students 12 & under & seniors 65 & over, \$12) in advance at voicesinharmonychorus.org and hvharmonizers.org, and at the door. 480-8843.

***Cultural Show: Children's Russian Club.** Local Russian children present *Russian Vaudeville*, a play based on 3 19th-century vaudevilles. The play is performed in Russian, with English-language synopses provided. 5 p.m., Washtenaw Community College Liberal Arts and Sciences Bldg. Auditorium, 4800 E. Huron River Dr. Free. 741-1953.

***"Annual Holiday Kirtan":** Ann Arbor Kirtan. All invited to join a group performance of this traditional devotional call-and-response music based on Hindu Vaishnava texts and the writings of poet/saints. Accompanied by live music based on rhythmic Indian ragas on bass guitar, tabla, and drums. The program begins with a social hour (bring a healthy snack or dessert to share). Tea is served. 6:30-9:30 p.m., Friends Meetinghouse, 1420 Hill St. Free, but donations accepted. 761-7435.

***Annual Fall Concert:** U-M Gospel Choral. Gospel music by this coed a cappella ensemble, plus dance by the Images of Praise interpretive dance team. Also, performances by the Taking Refuge Uttering Spoken Truth (TRUST) poetry team and the Prophetic Interpreters mime team. 6:30 p.m., New Life Church, 1541 Washtenaw. Free. mgc-eboard@umich.edu.

***"The Big Chill":** Main Street Area Association. Live outdoor entertainment by the Detroit-area indie pop-rock quartet The Pop Project and the local acoustic pop-rock quintet Timothy Monger State Park to celebrate the U-M/MSU hockey game (see above). 7-9 p.m., Main between William and Washington. Free. 668-7112.

"14th Annual Evening of Sacred Song: A Seasonal Celebration of Peace, Community, and Spirit": Sacred Song. This ad hoc local vocal en-



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semble presents an evening of songs from numerous spiritual traditions worldwide. The concert features works performed with and without instrumental accompaniment. Also, sing-alongs. Performers include Yarrow Halstead, Laura Machida, Cassandra Montgomery, Robin Wilson, LaRon Williams, Mary Anne Perrone, Barbara Stahler-Sholk, Gae Winn, AT Miller, Craig Kukuk, and Edie Lewis. Reception follows. Proceeds benefit the Women's Center of Ann Arbor. 7 p.m., *Genesis of Ann Arbor*, 2309 Packard. \$15 in advance, \$20 (or what you can afford to pay) at the door. Kids under age 12, free. 761-7962.

Vivo Sinfonietta: University Lutheran Chapel. Brett Luginbill conducts this local chamber ensemble in a program of classical Christmas music, including works by Manfredini, Purcell, and Schiassi. Also, a carol sing-along. Reception follows in the Common Cup coffeehouse. 7 p.m., University Lutheran Chapel, 1511 Washtenaw. \$15 (students, \$5). 971-0550, 327-6914.

"A Revue": Kerrytown Concert House. U-M musical theater department chair Brent Wagner directs musical theater students in highlights from new Broadway and off-Broadway musicals, including *The Addams Family*, *Next to Normal*, *In the Heights*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Title of Show*, *Leap of Faith*, and more. 7 & 9:30 p.m., KCH, 415 N. Fourth Ave. \$15-\$30. Reservations recommended. 769-2999.

"Pippi Longstocking": EMU Theater Department. See 3 Friday. 3 & 7 p.m.

★"The Eight: Reindeer Monologues": U-M Basement Arts. See 9 Thursday. 7 p.m.

Fall Concert: U-M 58 Greene. This coed a cappella ensemble performs rock, soul, R&B, and pop songs. 7:30 p.m., MLB Auditorium 3, 812 E. Washington. \$8 at the door. umich.edu/~corundum.

★"Angels in America": U-M Residential College Drama Concentration. U-M drama lecturer Kate Mendeloff directs RC students in scenes from Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning trilogy, subtitled "a gay fantasia on national themes," that centers on one HIV-positive man, his friends and loved ones, and the various presences who haunt him. 7:30 p.m., RC Keene Auditorium, East Quad, 701 East University. Free. 647-4354.

Ballroom Dancing Night: Pittsfield Township Parks and Recreation Department. Ballroom dancing to recorded music from the last several decades. Singles and couples invited. Refreshments. Preceded at 7 p.m. by a lesson. 8-10:30 p.m., Pittsfield Twp. Recreation Hall, S. State at Ellsworth. \$5. 822-2120.

★Christmas Concert: Concordia University Music Department. Concordia faculty perform a program of classic and contemporary holiday favorites. 8 p.m., Concordia Chapel of the Holy Trinity, 4090 Geddes. Free. 995-7389.

"Sounds of the South": Grand Traditions Vintage Dance Academy 19th-Century Ball. Various 19th-century dances to live music by Paul Winder, James Dapogny, and Mike Jones. The evening is a tribute to Stephen Foster, with several Foster songs. Preceded at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. by dance workshops (\$10 each). 8-11 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). \$30 (includes workshops). Preregistration requested at vintagedance.com. 769-0041, 426-0241.

★Michigan Chamber Players: U-M School of Music. This U-M music faculty ensemble performs a program of musical theater pieces, including selections from U-M music professor Andy Kirshner's *Liberty's Secret: The National Security Musical*, the Overture to *The Who's Tommy*, "They Live in You" from Elton John and Tony Rice's *The Lion King*, and the Prologue to Cy Coleman and David Zippel's *City of Angels*. 8 p.m., U-M Music School Britton Recital Hall, 1100 Baits Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

Annie Capps: Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth Cafe 704 Coffeehouse. Local singer-songwriter and electric guitarist who writes thoughtful, distinctively personal, warmly exuberant folk-rock songs that are both musically sophisticated and down-home. She's accompanied by her husband, guitarist Rod Capps. 8-10 p.m., Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Blvd. \$8 (\$15 for 2). 665-0409.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 3 & 8 p.m.

"Emails, Females, and Coattails": U-M Dance Department B.F.A. Concert. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"The Sorcerer": U-M Gilbert and Sullivan Society. See 9 Thursday. 2 & 8 p.m.

"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions. See 9 Thursday. 2 p.m. (*Living Together*) & 8 p.m. (*Table Manners*).

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 3 & 8 p.m.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 3 & 8 p.m.

"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"Much Ado about Nothing": U-M Theatre Department. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Nick Griffin: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 9 Thursday. 8 & 10:30 p.m.

12 SUNDAY

"Art in the Barn": The Yellow Barn. Sale of handmade gifts by more than 20 local artists. Refreshments and music. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., The Yellow Barn, 416 W. Huron. Free admission. 834-2488.

"Santa Central": Hudson Mills Metropark Interpretive Nature Programs. Kids invited to visit with Santa, play reindeer games, and enjoy a hayride. Snack. 10 a.m. and 12:30 & 2 p.m., Hudson Mills Activity Center, 8801 North Territorial Rd., Dexter. \$6 per child; kids under age 1, free. Preregistration required. \$5 vehicle entrance fee. 426-8211.

★"Chesstastic!": Ann Arbor District Library. All kids and adults invited to play chess. Sets provided. 1-4 p.m., AADL Traverwood Branch, 3333 Traverwood at Huron Pkwy. Free. 327-4555.

"The Firebird": Wild Swan Theater. See 9 Thursday. 1 & 4 p.m.

"Weekend with Brad Foster": Ann Arbor Community of Traditional Music and Dance. See 10 Friday. Today: advanced English dances to live music by Debbie Jackson, Susie Lorand, and Steve Schneider. 1:30-4:30 p.m., AACTMAD Concourse Hall, 4531 Concourse Dr. (off S. State across from the airport). \$10. (248)-288-4737.

"Fancy Nancy & Other Story Books": Theatreworks USA (Michigan Theater Foundation Not Just for Kids Series). This renowned New York City-based children's theater troupe returns to the Michigan Theater to present its all-new musical revue featuring minimusicals based on Jane O'Connor's *Fancy Nancy* stories and other best-selling children's books. Geared toward families with kids in grades K-4. 1:30 p.m., Michigan Theater. Tickets \$14 (MTF members, \$12) in advance at the Michigan Union Ticket Office & all other Ticketmaster outlets, and at the door. To charge by phone, call (800) 745-3000.

★Shape Note Singing: Ann Arbor Sacred Harp. All invited to join an afternoon of shape note, or sacred harp, singing, a form of communal hymn singing that has its roots in colonial America. Sacred Harp songbooks available, but singers encouraged to bring their own. 2-5 p.m., The Ark, 316 S. Main. Free, but donations accepted for music scholarships. 678-7549, 761-1451.

"The Nutcracker": Dance Alliance. Lisa Darby Clark directs local dancers and members of Jazz Dance Theater in a production of Tchaikovsky's ballet. 2 & 7 p.m., Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center, Saline High School, 1300 Campus Pkwy., Saline. Tickets \$13 in advance on Nov. 27 and Dec. 4 at the Dancer's Boutique (2414 E. Stadium in Ann Arbor) & Dance Alliance (811 W. Michigan in Saline), and at the door. 429-9599.

"The Sorcerer": U-M Gilbert and Sullivan Society. See 9 Thursday. 2 p.m.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 2 p.m.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 2 p.m.

"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions. See 9 Thursday. 2 p.m.

"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre. See 9 Thursday. 2 p.m.

"Much Ado about Nothing": U-M Theatre Department. See 9 Thursday. 2 p.m.

★"Community Read-Aloud: Dickens' A Christmas Carol": Concordia University. All invited to read part of Concordia University English professor Mark Looker's adaptation of Dickens' own reading script of his classic Christmas tale. 3 p.m., Concordia University Earhart Manor Living Room, 4090 Geddes. Free. 995-7389.

★"A Frank Loesser Celebration: Baby It's Cold Outside": Ann Arbor Civic Chorus. Linda Jones directs this local chorus in works by Loesser, 2 works by chorus member George Dentel, spirituals, and seasonal songs. 3 p.m., Forsythe Middle School Auditorium, 1655 Newport Rd. Free. 717-7581.

Arts in Motion Dance Studio. Recital by Arts in Motion music students and faculty. Followed by a reception and a dance demo by members of the local modern dance company People Dancing and Arts in Motion faculty and students. Refreshments. 3-5 p.m., Forsythe Middle School, 1655 Newport Rd. at Sunset. Donation of a nonperishable food item for Food Gatherers. 222-6246.

★"Holiday Concert": Dexter Community Band. Bill Gourley directs this 85-member volunteer ensemble in a program that includes "Carol of the Bells," "Laughing All the Way," "Santa's Journey," "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," a "Christ-



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mas from the 50s" medley, Jessel's "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," a Dixieland version of "Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer," and Anderson's "Sleigh Ride." Also, a Christmas sing-along. 3 p.m., Dexter Center for the Performing Arts, Dexter High School, 2200 N. Parker, Dexter. Free. 426-2734.

★**Orpheus Singers: U-M School of Music.** Grad students conduct this music student choir in Vivaldi's Magnificat, Mozart's "Misericordias Domini" and Te Deum, Stoltz's "O admirabile commercium," Poulenc's "O magnum mysterium," "Quem vidistis," and "Hodie Christus natus est." 3 p.m., U-M Walgreen Drama Center Stamps Auditorium, 1226 Murfin, North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

★**Society of Women Engineers Book Club.** All invited to join a discussion of *A Pattern in the Carpet*, British novelist Margaret Drabble's book that is part memoir about her aunt and their love of jigsaw puzzles and part a history of jigsaws. 4 p.m., Borders, 612 E. Liberty. Free. 668-7652.

★**Booked for Murder Mystery Book Club: Nicola's Books.** All invited to discuss *A Matter of Justice*, the 11th historical novel in Charles Todd's series about a Scotland Yard detective who this time investigates the death of a WW I veteran whose battered corpse is found 2 decades after the war. 4:30 p.m., Nicola's, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 769-2149.

★**Rainbow Book Club.** All invited to discuss *What Becomes of the Brokenhearted*, E. Lynn Harris's memoir about growing up black and gay in Arkansas. 4:30 p.m., WRAP office, 325 Braun Ct. Free. 763-4168.

★**Caroline Helton: U-M School of Music.** This U-M voice professor is accompanied by pianist Chris Turbessi, clarinetist Chad Burrow, and poet and U-M English professor Gillian White in "Beyond Romance: Fracturing the Fairy Tale," a program of settings of poetry about women's lives. Program: John Woods Duke's 6 Poems by Emily Dickinson, Ned Rorem's setting of Sylvia Plath's "Ariel," Kurt Weill's "Somehow I Never Could Believe," and *Of a Certain Age*, Tom Cipullo's settings of poems by Liesel Mueller and Judith Baume. 5 p.m., U-M Music School Britton Recital Hall, 1100 Baits Dr. (off Broadway), North Campus. Free. 764-0594.

★**"Sing Noel!": Northside Community Church.** Mary Ellen Hagel directs the church's chancel choir in Hal H. Hopson's Christmas cantata. Soloists are mezzo soprano Holly Perry, tenor Dale Simmerman, baritone Chris Grapentine, and handbell soloist Sheree Clark. Accompanists are percussionists Al and Tyler Clark, organist Susie Goodson, and pianist Kathryn Goodson. 7:30 p.m., Northside Community Church, 929 Barton Dr. Free. 662-6351.

13 MONDAY

★**Tot Story Hour:** Temple Beth Emeth. TBE librarian Wendy Holden reads stories to families with young children. 10 a.m., TBE Library, 2309 Packard. Free. 665-4744.

★**"Show and Tell": Ann Arbor Civil War Round Table.** Club members show and briefly discuss various Civil War-related items, including diaries, photographs, weapons, uniforms, paintings, and more. Previous highlights have included a set of very rare engraved slave tags and a stirring performance of period songs. 7 p.m., St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center, 5305 Elliott Dr. (off Huron River Dr.). Free. (517) 750-2741.

★**History of Science Reading Group: Motte & Bailey, Booksellers.** All invited to join a discussion of *The Electric Life of Michael Faraday*, Alan Hirshfeld's biography of the 19th-century scientist who discovered links between electricity, magnetism, and light. 7:30-9 p.m., Motte & Bailey, 212 N. Fourth Ave. Free. 669-0451.

★**University Philharmonia Orchestra: U-M School of Music.** Christopher James Lees conducts this music student ensemble in a program highlighted by a performance, with the University Choir, of Poulenc's joyously ecstatic choral symphony *Gloria*, which the University Choir performs a cappella on Dec. 7 (see listing). Also, Ravel's mournfully gorgeous *Pavane pour une infante defunte* and Richard Strauss's monumental tone poem *Tod und Verklarung*. 8 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Free. 764-0594.

14 TUESDAY

★**"Towards the End of the European Social Model?": U-M Center for European Studies.** Talk by U-M sociology professor Margaret Somers. Noon-1:30 p.m., 1636 SSWB, 1080 South University. Free. 647-2743.

★**Student Guitar and Flute Recital: Ann Arbor Suzuki Institute.** Performances by guitar students of MaryLou Roberts and Terry Farmer and flute students of Kelly McDermott. 6 p.m., First Congregational

Church, 608 E. William. Free. info@annarborsuzuki.org, 995-2099.

★**"DNR Funding Woes": Washtenaw Ski Touring Club.** Talk by Detroit Free Press outdoors writer Eric Sharp. The program begins with a business meeting. 7 p.m., Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave. Free. 662-SKIS.

★**"Going Blind": Ann Arbor District Library.** Screening of Joe Lovett's documentary about vision loss in the U.S. 7-8:30 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

★**Sierra Club Book Club: Nicola's Books.** All invited to discuss *The Wilderness World of John Muir*, a collection of essays by the early 20th-century naturalist known as the "Father of the National Parks." 7:30 p.m., Nicola's, 2513 Jackson, Westgate shopping center. Free. 971-1157.

35th Annual Christmas Concert: The Willis Patterson Our Own Thing Chorale. U-M music professor emeritus Patterson directs this popular local choir in Christmas spirituals and works by African American composers. 7:30 p.m., Bethel AME Church, 900 John A. Woods Dr. Free will offering. 769-4437.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

15 WEDNESDAY

★**Book Club: Ann Arbor Senior Center.** All seniors age 50 & over invited to join Liz Gleich to discuss a book TBA at a2gov.org/senior. 12:30-1:30 p.m., Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin. Free. 794-6250.

"Paint Your Own Holiday Ornament": Cranbrook Whole Foods Market Kid's Club. All kids invited to make ornaments with dough. 4 p.m., Cranbrook Whole Foods Market, 990 W. Eisenhower Pkwy., Cranbrook Village. \$5. 997-7500.

★**"Ho-Ho-HOPE for the Holidays Carnival": Concordia University.** A family-oriented holiday carnival, with games, entertainment, and a visit from Santa. Refreshments. Proceeds benefit Mott Children's Hospital. 4-9 p.m., Concordia Gymnasium, 4090 Geddes. \$5/family or a toy donation. 995-7350.

★**"Storytelling Marathon": Barnes & Noble.** Logan Elementary School staff present a storytelling program for kids of all ages. 5-7 p.m., Barnes & Noble, 3235 Washtenaw. Free. 973-1618.

★**"Drumunity!"** Lori Fithian, a local drummer and drum teacher, leads a drum circle. Instruments provided, or bring your own. Kids welcome. Preceded at 6:45 p.m. by a brief drum lesson. 7-9 p.m., Crazy Wisdom Bookstore Tea Room, 114 S. Main. Free. 426-7818.

★**Culinary History Reading Group: Motte & Bailey, Booksellers.** All invited to join a discussion of *A History of the World in 6 Glasses*, Tom Standage's book that looks at history through beverages—from wine and spirits to coffee and Coke—and argues that each epoch from the Stone Age to the 20th century produced a signature drink. 7:30-9 p.m., Motte & Bailey, 212 N. Fourth Ave. Free. 669-0451.

★**Choir Concert: Huron High School.** Program TBA. 7:30 p.m., HHS Meyers Auditorium, 2727 Fuller Rd. Free. 994-2040.

★**Nuevo Rumbo: UMMA Jazz Series.** Performance by this Afro-Cuban jazz quartet. 8 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 764-0395.

★**"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company.** See 1 Wednesday. 3 & 8 p.m.

★**"Schumann Festival": Mad About Chamber Music.** See 7 Tuesday. Tonight: U-M students perform Schumann's D Minor, F Major, and G Minor piano trios. 8 p.m.

★**"Chili's Comedy Dojo": Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase.** Fast-paced show featuring stand-up comedy by 15 recent graduates of veteran comic and former *Tonight Show* writer Chili Challis's Comedy Dojo. 8 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant), \$5 in advance and at the door. 996-9080.

16 THURSDAY

Advent Noon Recital: First Presbyterian Church. See 2 Thursday. Today: Ann Arbor Guild of Organists member (and U-M math professor) Daniel Forger performs major organ works. 12:15-12:45 p.m.

★**"Zumba": International Neighbors.** All area women invited to learn how to do this aerobic fitness program that began in Colombia. Nursery care provided for preschoolers. Refreshments. 1-2:30 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church social hall, 1500 Scio Church Rd. Free. 995-1645.

★**Alberta Adams: Ann Arbor District Library.** This veteran Detroit blues shouter and balladeer has toured with everyone from Louis Jordan and LaVern Baker to Duke Ellington and Roy Eldridge. Known for what one critic called "an earthy, world-weary voice which hints of a past filled with hound-dog

men and hard-luck stories," she is backed by R.J.'s Rhythm Rockers, a Detroit blues band led by drummer R. J. Spangler. 7-8:30 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 3 & 7 p.m.

"The Early Woodland Period in Central Lower Michigan": Michigan Archaeology Society. Talk by U-M Museum of Paleontology specialist Scott Beld. 7:30 p.m., U-M Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, 434 S. State. Free. (248) 437-4183.

"A Holiday Concert Tradition": Ypsilanti Community Choir/Washtenaw Community Concert Band. Ariel Toews-Ricotta directs the choir in Pietro Yon's "Gesù Bambino" and Gustav Holst's setting of "In the Bleak Midwinter." Jerry Robbins directs the band in Leroy Anderson's *A Christmas Festival* and the Tocatta from Charles-Marie Widor's Symphony no. 5 for Organ, with organist James Wagner. The program concludes with a joint performance of the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah*. The audience is also encouraged to sing along. 7:30 p.m., EMU Pease Auditorium, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 481-9285.

***Vulfman & DJ Paraddiddle:** UMMA Third Thursdays. These 2 student musicians perform a high-energy program that incorporates talk boxes and drums. 8 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 764-0395.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Rob Little: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Dec. 16-18. This very funny Detroit-area comic is a highly animated performer known for his fast-paced, self-deprecating observational humor about such matters as dieting, exercise, and girlfriends. Preceded by 2 opening acts. Alcohol is served. 8 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant). \$8 (Thurs.) & \$11 (Fri. & Sat.) reserved seating in advance, \$10 (Thurs.) & \$13 (Fri. & Sat.) general admission at the door. 996-9080.

17 FRIDAY

***Gaming Tournaments:** Ann Arbor District Library. Dec. 17-19 & 21. Dec. 17: "Super Smash Brothers Throwdown." For adults and teens in grade 6 & up. Dec. 18: "Super Smash Brothers Grand Championship." For adults and teens in grade 6 & up. Dec. 19: "Open Play." For adults and teens in grade 6 & up. Dec. 21: "Wii Sports Resort." For all ages. 6-8:30 p.m. (Dec. 17), noon-4 p.m. (Dec. 18), & 1-4 p.m. (Dec. 19 & 21), AADL multipurpose room, 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-4555.

***"Jazz Holiday Showcase":** Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts. Performances by AASPA students and faculty. 6 p.m., Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave. Free. 213-2000.

Parents' Night Out: Ann Arbor YMCA. Kids ages 2-10 can enjoy dinner, games, and sports, and (age 5 & over only) a dip in the pool. 6:15-10 p.m., YMCA, 400 W. Washington. \$30 (members, \$25). Preregistration required. 661-8058.

"Groove in 3D": U-M Groove. High-energy U-M student percussion and dance ensemble featuring traditional and nontraditional instruments (trash cans, propane tanks, toothbrushes, and more). Opening act is U-M dance group Dance2xs. 7 p.m., Michigan Theater. Tickets \$8 (students, \$5) in advance at the Michigan Union Ticket Office and Ticketmaster.com, and at the door. 763-TKTS.

***"The Artsy Meaningless Slide Show":** University Lowbrow Astronomers. Presentation by club member Fred Schebor. 7:30 p.m., 130 Dennison, 500 Church. Free. 747-6585.

"Colors of Winter": Women's Chamber Chorus. David Perample directs this independent 30-member local women's chorus in a concert of seasonal music, including spirituals, carols, and novelty tunes. Also, a performance by the group's Joyous Ringers handbell choir. Piano accompanist is Leslie Austin. 7:30 p.m., West Side United Methodist Church, 900 S. Seventh at Davis. Donations accepted. 665-9271.

"The Snow Queen": Young Actors Guild. Dec. 17-19. Sue Roe directs young local actors in Stuart Paterson's stage adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale about a young girl who courageously sets out to free her friend, who has been kidnapped by the beautiful but sinister Snow Queen. In the course of her journey, the heroine learns much about the true nature of friendship. 7:30 p.m., Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, 911 North University. Tickets \$15 (students through high school, \$10). 913-9800.

"Don's Birthday Dance": Sharon Hollow String Band. Various callers lead advanced contras, with music by the Sharon Hollow String Band. No part-

ner needed. In honor of veteran local caller Don Theyken's birthday. 8-11 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). \$8. 408-1829.

"The Nutcracker": Ann Arbor Ballet Theater. Dec. 17-19. Carol Radovic directs this local dance company in its performance of Tchaikovsky's perennially popular Christmas ballet. Based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann, it tells the tale of a little girl whose magical nutcracker doll transports her to a fairyland on Christmas Eve. About 100 dancers perform, ranging from children to adults—some of the adult dancers have danced in the production since they were tots. 8 p.m., Power Center. Tickets \$24 (students & seniors, \$20; kids age 12 & under, \$14) available in advance at the Michigan Union Ticket Office, Ticketmaster outlets, and at the door. To charge by phone, call 763-TKTS.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre. See 9 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Rob Little: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 16 Thursday. 8 & 10:30 p.m.

18 SATURDAY

64th Annual Christmas Bird Count: Washtenaw Audubon Society. The count area is a 15-mile-diameter circle centered on Ann Arbor; its 8 regions must be counted in a single day. This makeshift census may be off by thousands, but much useful information is gained by comparing the results from year to year. The count is also great fun, and everyone from novices to experienced birders is invited to volunteer for all or part of the day, either as a field observer or (if you have a bird feeder) as a feeder watcher. Some count regions also conduct predawn searches for owls. The results are tallied at a potluck dinner at Leslie Science & Nature Center this evening. 6 a.m. For instructions and further information, call Jacco Gelderloos at 973-9422. \$5 fee to defray costs of publishing the results in *American Bird*. To sign up as a feeder watcher, contact Kurt Hagemester at 663-9746 or khagemester@sbcglobal.net.

"Winter Fest": U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens. All kids, accompanied by a parent, invited to celebrate the winter solstice by making evergreen swags and hand-decorated wrapping paper. Bring a spool of ribbon for a ribbon exchange. 10 a.m.-noon, Matthaei, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd. \$7 (includes materials). 647-7600.

"MittenMade Holiday Craft Show": Blue House Ann Arbor. Handmade holiday gifts by local artists. 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Blue House, 1026 S. Main. Free admission. 780-1762.

"Holiday Party at the Ann Arbor Community Center": Ann Arbor Community Center. All kids and their families invited for arts and crafts, games, gingerbread making, food to celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. Also, an appearance by Santa. 1-3 p.m., Ann Arbor Community Center, 625 N. Main. Donation. 662-3128.

"Stories for the Season of Light": Performance Network Children's Theater Network. Interactive family-oriented storytelling program of original and traditional tales celebrating the season by LaRon Williams, a popular local storyteller who uses a wide range of dialects, gestures, and facial expressions to conjure all sorts of human, animal, and supernatural characters. Milk & cookies. 1 p.m., Performance Network, 120 E. Huron. Tickets \$10 (youth 16 & under, \$7) in advance at performancenetwork.org & by phone, and at the door. For reservations or to charge by phone, call 663-0681.

***Yule Ritual: Druids of Shining Lakes Grove.** All invited to celebrate the rebirth of the parents of the cosmos in Irish mythology, primal mother Danu and sun god Bel. The ritual includes singing, making an offering, and honoring ancestors and nature spirits. Also, potluck (bring a dish to pass) and raffle. Preceded by a fire watch beginning Dec. 17 (7 p.m., 263 Larkspur). 2-5 p.m., ICC Education Center, 1522 Hill St. Free. 277-1897.

***LezRead Book Club.** All lesbians invited to discuss 2 children's books: Harvey Fierstein's *The Sissy Duckling* and Marcus Ewert's *10,000 Dresses*. 4-6 p.m., WRAP Resource Center, 319 Braun Ct. Free. 663-0036.

***Treetown Community Chorus.** David Perample directs this independent local mixed chorus in a varied program highlighted by John Rutter's "Candlelight Carol." Piano accompanist is Leslie Austin. 4



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Lena Ehrlich, Psy.D.
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p.m., West Side United Methodist Church, 900 S. Seventh St. Free; donations accepted. (586) 504-1155.

★**Christmas Festival: Great Lakes Branch of the Anthroposophical Society of America.** The program begins with a performance of the late Ernst and Katherine Katz's Nativity drama *The Ann Arbor Christmas Play*. Followed by lighting of the Christmas tree, singing, and socializing. Bring a Christmas sweet to share. 7 p.m., Rudolf Steiner House, 1923 Geddes Ave. (Parking permitted on the west side of Oswego and the east side of Ridgeway.) Free. 485-3764.

★**Christmas Concert: One Voice Gospel Choir.** Traditional Christmas carols and stories. Followed by a reception with homemade desserts. 7 p.m., St. Paul United Methodist Church, 122 W. Michigan Ave., Saline. Free will offering. 845-1985.

★**"The Snow Queen": Young Actors Guild.** See 17 Friday, 2 & 7:30 p.m.

★**"Sudden Breath": Vocal Arts Ensemble.** This 28-voice chamber choir is joined by the Motor City Brass Quintet in motets, carols, and winter music. The program is highlighted by *Midwinter Songs*, Morton Lauridsen's setting of Robert Graves' poetry. 8 p.m., Genesis, 2309 Packard. Tickets \$15 (seniors & students, \$10) in advance at vaesuddenbreath.eventbrite.com; \$20 (seniors & students, \$10) at the door. 649-6831.

★**Canterbury House Benefit Concert.** Performances by the local jazz ensemble Quartex, singer-songwriter Hannah Winkler, and the tribal music and dance ensemble Naked Pictures. 8 p.m., Canterbury House, 721 E. Huron. \$5-\$10 donation. 764-3162.

★**3rd Saturday Contra Dance: Pittsfield Grange.** With live music by the Stoughton String Band. No partner needed; beginners welcome. Bring flat, smooth-sole shoes. Preceded by a lesson at 7:45 p.m. 8-11 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). \$10. 426-0241.

★**"The Nutcracker": Ann Arbor Ballet Theater.** See 17 Friday, 2 & 8 p.m.

★**"The Norman Conquests": PTD Productions.** See 9 Thursday, 2 p.m. (Round and Round the Garden) & 8 p.m. (Table Manners).

★**"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company.** See 2 Thursday, 3 & 8 p.m.

★**"Best of Friends": Purple Rose Theatre Company.** See 1 Wednesday, 3 & 8 p.m.

★**"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season.** See 2 Thursday, 8 p.m.

★**"If Only in My Dreams": Blackbird Theatre.** See 9 Thursday, 8 p.m.

★**Rob Little: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase.** See 16 Thursday, 8 & 10:30 p.m.

★**"Vinyl Destruction": Vault of Midnight.** Art show featuring works made with vinyl records, cassette and 8-track tapes, and CDs. Music spun by a DJ. Refreshments. Raffle. Bring your own beverage, if you wish. Age 21 & over admitted. 10 p.m., Vault of Midnight Ultra Lounge, 219 S. Main. \$5 donation. 998-1413.

19 SUNDAY

★**"Dancing Babies": Ann Arbor District Library.** Robinsongs for Kids director Robin Robinson presents a program of music and movement for babies through 5-year-olds. 1-1:40 p.m., AADL Malletts Creek Branch, 3090 E. Eisenhower (between Stone School & Packard). Free. 327-8301.

★**"Felt Ball Fun": Ann Arbor District Library.** All kids (grade K & up) and adults invited to make and play with a felt ball. Materials provided. 1-2:30 p.m., AADL Pittsfield Branch, 2359 Oak Valley Dr. between Scio Church Rd. and Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Free. 327-8301.

★**"Frosty on Ice": Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation.** All invited to skate with Frosty the Snowman to recorded holiday music. Free candy canes. 1-2:30 p.m., Veterans Ice Arena, 2150 Jackson Rd. \$6 (youths age 17 & under and seniors age 60 & over, \$5). \$1 discount for city residents. Skate rentals available (\$3). 794-6235.

★**"Cassidy Road Bog Hike-or-Ski": Huron Valley Sierra Club.** Local outdoorsman Barry Lonik leads a 2.5 mile hike (or cross-country ski, if there's snow) to identify native Michigan conifers in Waterloo Recreation Area. 1 p.m., meet at Zingerman's Roadhouse (Westgate shopping center) to carpool. Free. 477-5715.

★**46th Annual Community "Messiah" Sing.** All interested people capable of reading and performing the vocal parts are invited to join this friendly, informal, unrehearsed performance of Handel's beloved oratorio. Between 150 and 200 singers usually participate, including professionals, semiprofessionals, serious amateurs, families, and church choirs. A volunteer orchestra of 35 to 45 instrumentalists is also needed; prospective players should call the number below as soon as possible to ensure section balance. Directed by Richard Ingram. Scores provided, or participants

may bring their own. (The Prout edition, published by Schirmer, is used.) Orchestra players should bring their own stands and be ready for a warm-up at 1:15 p.m. Cider, water, and hot tea provided; bring goodies to share. 1:30 p.m., St. Clare Episcopal Church, 2309 Packard. \$5 suggested donation to help defray cost of using the building. Prospective orchestra members should contact Meg Gower at megower@umich.edu or 433-0150.

★**"Little Town of Bethlehem": First Unitarian Universalist Congregation.** Screening of Jim Hanon's 2010 documentary about 3 men of different faiths who become nonviolent activists in the midst of the overwhelmingly violent Palestinian-Israeli culture. 1:45 p.m., FUUC, 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Free. 665-6158.

★**"Mai-Thu Perret: An Ideal for Living": UMMA.** Guided tours of the current exhibit of works in various media by contemporary Swiss artist Perret (see Galleries). Perret's work centers around her fictional narrative about a utopian women's community in New Mexico. 2 p.m., UMMA, 525 S. State. Free. 763-0395.

★**Family Dance: Pittsfield Union Grange.** All children and their parents or grandparents invited for contra and square dancing with live music. 2-4 p.m., Pittsfield Grange, 3337 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. (just south of Oak Valley Dr.). \$12 per family. 769-1052.

★**Ellen Rowe Trio: Kerrytown Concert House.** U-M jazz piano professor Rowe leads her trio in "The Jazz Piano Trio: the Arrangements," the 4th in her series of programs covering different aspects of jazz trios. With bassist Paul Keller and drummer Sean Dobbins. 2 p.m., KCH, 415 N. Fourth Ave. \$10-\$25 (students, \$5). Reservations recommended. 769-2999.

★**"The Nutcracker": Ann Arbor Ballet Theater.** See 17 Friday, 2 p.m.

★**"The Snow Queen": Young Actors Guild.** See 17 Friday, 2 p.m.

★**"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season.** See 2 Thursday, 2 p.m.

★**Annual Christmas Concert: St. Thomas Catholic Church.** The St. Thomas choir performs works by Puritoy, Rutter, Mathias, and Handel. Also, a performance by the children's choir. 3 p.m., St. Thomas, Kingsley at N. State. Free. 761-8606.

★**"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company.** See 2 Thursday, 3 p.m.

★**Dexter Community Orchestra.** Anthony Elliott Jones directs the orchestra and the Washtenaw Community Orchestra Chorus in a performance of Vaughan Williams' Christmas cantata *Hodie*. 4 p.m., Dexter Center for the Performing Arts, Dexter High School, 2200 N. Parker (south off Shield from Baker Rd.). Dexter. Free. 355-0725.

★**"Traditional King's College Festival of Christmas Lessons and Carols": St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.** St. Andrew's music director Deborah Friauff directs the church adult choir, 2 children's choirs, and handbell choir in this traditional English service, in which 9 scripture readings alternate with seasonal anthems and carols, some sung by the congregation. The music begins with a solo treble performance of "Once in Royal David's City." 4 p.m., St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 306 N. Division. Free. 663-0518.

20 MONDAY

★**"Hands-On Holidays: Science of Toys": Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.** Dec. 20-Jan. 2 (except Dec. 24 & 25). Hands-on activities, including Slinky races and a chance to make a toy, learn how toys work, design and launch a rocket, and more. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Dec. 20-23 & Dec. 27-31) & noon-4 p.m. (Dec. 26 and Jan. 1 & 2), AAHOM, 220 E. Ann. \$9 (members & infants, free) regular museum admission. 995-5439.

★**"Pokémon": Ann Arbor District Library.** All kids in grades K-5 invited to bring their Nintendo DS and their copy of Pokémon Diamond, Pearl, Platinum, Heart Gold, or Soul Silver to compete for prizes in daily tournaments. Also, a chance to trade Pokémon cards and share playing tips. 1-5 p.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. at William. Free. 327-8301.

21 TUESDAY

★**"Winter Solstice Crafts": Ann Arbor District Library.** Craft activity for preschoolers through 5th graders. Materials provided. 2-3 p.m., AADL Malletts Creek Branch, 3090 E. Eisenhower between Stone School & Packard. Free. 327-4555.

★**New Millennium Poetry at Sweetwaters.** Poetry reading by Kalamazoo College writer-in-residence Dianne Seuss. Her latest collection *Wolf Lake, White Gown Blown Open* won the 2009 Juniper Prize for

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Poetry. Followed by open mike readings. 7-8:30 p.m., Sweetwaters Coffee & Tea, 123 W. Washington. Free. 994-6663.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 7 p.m.

★"Great Adventure Trips from Around the Globe": Huron Valley Sierra Club. Several club members give slide-illustrated talks on their most adventurous trips. Refreshments. 7:30 p.m., U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd. Free. 665-0248.

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. Dec. 21-23, 26, & 28-31. Movie star, playwright, and Purple Rose founder Daniels is also a singer-songwriter whose folk-flavored originals include such favorites as "If William Shatner Can, I Can, Too," "The Lifelong Tiger Fan Blues," "State Trooper," and "Recreational Vehicle." His shows are interspersed with chats about how each song came to be. A benefit for Purple Rose. 8 p.m., Purple Rose, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Tickets \$70 except Dec. 31 (\$75 at 3 p.m. & \$80 at 8 p.m.) in advance beginning Dec. 13 and (if available) at the door. 433-ROSE.

22 WEDNESDAY

★Comedy Magic Show: Ann Arbor District Library. Magician Jason Abbott performs a show for kids in grades K-5. 10-10:45 a.m., AADL multipurpose room (lower level), 343 S. Fifth Ave. Free. 327-8301.

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 7 p.m.

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 3 & 8 p.m.

"Comedy Jamm": Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

23 THURSDAY

"It's a Wonderful Life": Encore Musical Theatre Company. See 2 Thursday. 7 p.m.

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 8 p.m.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

Chili Challis & Friends: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Cincinnati native Challis is a sharp-witted observational humorist known for his cutting, sometimes sarcastic commentary on politics and other topical matters. A former writer for both Jay Leno and the Mother Goose and Grimm comic strip, Challis was nominated for a regional Emmy for his contribution to Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist Mike Peters' Pen of Mike Peters feature. He is joined tonight by several of the best graduates of the "Comedy Dojo" he teaches at the Comedy Showcase. Alcohol is served. 8 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant). \$8 reserved seating in advance, \$10 general admission at the door. 996-9080.

24 FRIDAY

"Marathon Skate": Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation. Dec. 24 & 31. Skating to music by a DJ. 1:10-5 p.m., Veterans Ice Arena, 2150 Jackson Rd. \$6 (youths age 17 & under and seniors age 60 & over, \$5). \$1 discount for city residents. Skate rentals available (\$3). 794-6235.

★Lessons and Carols: First Presbyterian Church. The traditional program of scripture readings interspersed with sacred carols, anthems, and hymns performed by the church's chancel choir and the First Presbyterian Brass Quintet. 5 & 7:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 1432 Washtenaw. Free. 662-4466.

"Gospel Christmas Cantata": New Hope Baptist Church. All of the church's choirs perform a Christmas music program. 6 p.m., New Hope Baptist Church, 218 Chapin. Free will offering. 663-3256.

★Lessons and Carols: Northside Community Church. A program of scripture readings, sacred music, carol singing, and opportunities for children to place the figures in the Nativity scene, concluding with a candle lighting procession and singing of "Silent Night." Accompanist is U-M piano professor Martin Katz. 7-8 p.m., Northside Community Church, 929 Barton Dr. Free. 662-6351.

★Festival of Lessons and Carols: First Baptist Church. The church presents the Christmas story through a program of alternating scriptural readings and choral and congregational singing adapted from the famous Christmas Eve service at King's College, Cambridge (England). Children welcome; child care provided for infants and toddlers. 7:30 p.m., First Baptist Church, 512 E. Huron. Free. 663-9376.

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 8 p.m.

★"Festival Prelude": St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. St. Andrew's music director Deborah Friauff directs the church choir, bell choir, soloists, and other musicians in a program of Christmas carols, anthems, and other music in candlelight. 10:30 p.m., St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 306 N. Division. Free. 663-0518.

25 SATURDAY (Christmas)

26 SUNDAY

"The Drowsy Chaperone": Performance Network Professional Season. See 2 Thursday. 2 p.m.

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 3 p.m.

27 MONDAY

"Cross-Country Ski Orientation Clinic": Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission. A chance to try out cross-country skiing. The program begins with a basic lesson and ends with a 1-mile ski on the easy Green Trail. 9-11 a.m., Rolling Hills County Park (meet near the Lodge), 7660 Stony Creek Rd. between Merritt & Bemis rds., east of Carpenter, Ypsilanti Twp. \$5 (equipment rental \$5 extra). 971-6337, ext. 334.

28 TUESDAY

★"Happy New Year Crafts": Ann Arbor District Library. Craft activity for preschoolers through 5th graders. Materials provided. 2-3 p.m., AADL Traverwood Branch, 3333 Traverwood at Huron Pkwy. Free. 327-8301.

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 8 p.m.

29 WEDNESDAY

★"Silly Stories": Ann Arbor District Library. With nationally renowned local storyteller Laura Pershin Raynor. For kids in grades K-3 (accompanied by an adult). 10-10:30 a.m., AADL Pittsfield Branch, 2359 Oak Valley Dr. between Scio Church Rd. and Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. Free. 327-8301.

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 8 p.m.

"Comedy Jamm": Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. See 1 Wednesday. 8 p.m.

30 THURSDAY

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 8 p.m.

Comedy Showcase All-Stars: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Performances by 4 of the best area comics who appeared at the Comedy Showcase during 2010. Tim Rowlands is a talented prop comedian who mixes jokes, stories, and wry, edgy commentary with juggling routines and other tomfoolery. Alcohol is served. Dave Mishevitz is a rising young star known for his smart, wacky jokes. Also, 2 other performers TBA. 8 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant). \$8 reserved seating in advance, \$10 general admission at the door. 996-9080.

31 FRIDAY (New Year's Eve)

"Jeff Daniels: Onstage & Unplugged": Purple Rose Theatre Company. See 21 Tuesday. 3 & 8 p.m.

Josh Sneed: Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase. Young Cincinnati comic, a favorite on satellite radio comedy channels as well as cable TV who specializes in fast-paced observational riffs about popular culture. Alcohol is served. 8 & 10:30 p.m., 314 E. Liberty (below Seva restaurant). \$25 (early show) & \$30 (late show) reserved seating in advance and general admission at the door. 996-9080.

Silver & Gold New Year's Eve Dance: Parents Without Partners. All singles invited for an evening of dancing and socializing. Recorded 70s to contemporary dance music played by a DJ. Cash bar. Dressy attire; the price of admission includes a continental breakfast. 9 p.m.-1 a.m., Grotto Club, 2070 W. Stadium. \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. 578-3664.

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Music at Nightspots

old-time music

by John Hinchey

Listings are based on information available at press time. Updated schedules are posted at arborweb.com, but it may be advisable to call ahead.

The Ark

316 S. Main

761-1451

Michigan's leading showcase for American and international performers of all forms of traditional music. Shows almost every night at 8 p.m., Mon.-Sat., & 7:30 p.m., Sun. Unless otherwise noted, tickets are sold in advance at Herb David Guitar Studio and the Michigan Union Ticket Office & all other Ticketmaster outlets, and at the door. **Dec. 1: JJ Grey & Mofro.** Down-home, soulful blues-country-funk-rock hybrid by the highly regarded Florida band led by singer-songwriter Grey. The band's new CD *Georgia Warhorse* is a top-20 iTunes hit. Opening act is Mofro dobro player **Daryl Hance**, a blues-rock singer-songwriter. \$22. **Dec. 2: Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials.** Rough and raw boogie and blues by this west-side Chicago quartet led by singer and slide guitarist Lil' Ed Williams, a nephew of Chicago blues great J. B. Hutto. Known for their unalloyed gutbucket approach to the music and a bulls-in-a-china-shop stage manner, the Blues Imperials have been described as "a frenzied mixture of Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, and Elmore James." The band has released several Alligator CDs. \$15. **Dec. 3: Orpheum Bell.** Local self-styled acoustic "country and eastern" quintet that features a richly musical, often ravishing blend of country-folk rhythms with Gypsy and other Eastern European melodies, drawing on a diverse range of influences from the Carter Family, Grandpa Jones, and Gillian Welch to Kurt Weill, Tom Waits, and the Pogues. Its core sound blends vocals, accordion, guitar, and double bass, with additional texture and luster from violins, clarinet, percussion, and autoharp. Opening acts are **Lac La Belle** (see review, right), a Detroit Western swing-based acoustic Americana trio led by singer-songwriter Jennie Knaggs, and **Danny Kline**, a local alt-country singer-songwriter and guitarist. \$15. **Dec. 4: The Gibson Brothers.** Upstate New York bluegrass ensemble that was named 1998 Emerging Artists of the Year by the International Bluegrass Music Association. "These guys completely captured my heart without so much as a nod to newgrass," says a *Music Row* reviewer. "This is the pure stuff, the way bluegrass sounds best." Opening act is **Detour Bluegrass**, an up-and-coming Michigan bluegrass band whose new single "My Life Just Ain't a Bluegrass Song" is a hit on the national bluegrass charts. \$15. **Dec. 5: Over the Rhine.** Energetic heartland rock 'n' roll, at once artful and urgent, by this acclaimed Cincinnati quartet. Led by the husband-and-wife songwriter duo of vocalist Karin Bergquist and bassist Linford Detweiler, the band is known for its enchantingly spare arrangements and its reflective, self-consciously literary lyrics. The band's Ark shows usually sell out in advance. \$25. **Dec. 6: John Berry.** Rare club appearance by this country-pop star, a singer with a big, commanding voice and a repertoire of alternately earnest and warmly sentimental songs about life's ordinary joys and sorrows. Tonight's show features Christmas music, including tunes from Berry's popular CD, *O Holy Night Live*. \$25. **Dec. 7: Lee Murdock.** Murdock is a Great Lakes troubadour who writes songs about the lives of sailors and fishermen, lighthouse keepers, ghosts, outlaws, and everyday heroes. His music blends ragtime, Irish, blues, and folk styles, and he accompanies himself on 6- and 12-string guitars. Tonight he performs his "Christmas Ship Concert," a family concert commemorating a late 19th-century tradition. At the end of the lumber season, Great Lakes captains would carry a final cargo heralding the holiday season with decks piled high with fresh-cut evergreen trees and garlands. \$15. **Dec. 8: Open Stage.** All acoustic performers invited. Fifteen acts are selected randomly from those who sign up to perform 8 minutes (or 2 songs) each. The most talented and popular Open Stage performers are offered their own evenings at the Ark. \$3 (members & students, \$2). **Dec. 9: "9th Annual Concert for Peace."** Several local folk, rock, and roots bands and singer-songwriters perform their own and others' antiwar and peace songs. Performers include singer-songwriters **Chris Buhalis**, **John Latini**, **Dave Boutette**, **Dick Siegel**, **Jay Stielstra**, **Rod and Annie Capps**, and **Stewart Francke**, along with boogie-woogie pianist **Mr. B.**, the versatile rock 'n' roll band **FUBAR**, the all-

Lac La Belle

Fresh wonders

I saw Lac La Belle in 2009 at the fabulous Dally in the Alley in Detroit, just a little while after the trio adopted that name. Before then, they were Jennie and the Sure Shots; that made you think they played cowgirl music, which for the most part they don't. Lac La Belle isn't an ideal name, either; the group has no connection to the Upper Peninsula lake, and the name doesn't quite match their website's proclamation of themselves as "an intriguing acoustic trio that juxtaposes the early decades of recorded rural American music with decaying Rustbelt aesthetic." But that didn't stop a good crowd from finding its way to Lac La Belle's set, threading its way among stages devoted to techno and hip-hop and punk, drawn by Lac La Belle's rough-sounding but exact harmonies and instrumental work.

Lac La Belle may still be forming their identity, but they're onto some highly original ideas. The songs on their eponymous CD are of several types, none of them closely connected to the decaying Rust Belt. The trio does indeed draw on old-time country music, with modal scales and a traded-off instrumentalism of guitar, mandolin, banjo, double bass, and an accordion—the last used, to quite ethereal effect, on the Eddy Arnold standard "Cattle



Call." They do other old-time standards, including an instrumental "Grandfather's Clock" that distills their straightforward textures and rhythms, and the folk ballad "Prodigal Son." And there's one Lac La Belle song, "The Dog," that's strong enough stuff to merit a warning: in her distinctive soprano, with a bit of lilt and a

bit of throat, lead vocalist Jennie Knaggs tells of shooting an injured dog to put its suffering to an end, and having her own thoughts morph into those of suicide.

But the largest group of songs is also the most distinctive. They seem to come from Knaggs' pen, although none of Lac La Belle's songs carries a songwriter credit. They're statements of identity, in life or in love, and lyrically they're not too far off the independent female voices like Kasey Chambers and Neko Case who have populated alternative country venues. But the old-time accompaniment adds an edge that rock guitars don't furnish, interacting with the lyrics in completely new ways. When Knaggs sings "I build myself up from the way I run," or "we survive the different ways of dying," she fuses the hard existential gloom of Dock Boggs with contemporary emotional content. Knaggs, who is classically trained and also performs in rock and Afrobeat bands, has the vocal chops to carry this off: she's not affecting an old-time sound but carrying a musical resource forward.

Lac La Belle opens on December 3 at the Ark for Orpheum Bell, another extraordinarily original band rooted in old American music. Danny Kline of the sparse Ann Arbor Americana band Delta 88 is also on the bill. You couldn't ask for a better one-night demonstration of the fresh wonders of southeast Michigan's alternative country scene.

—James M. Manheim

female country trio **Stella**, the country-folk duo **Sophia Hanft & Dave Keeney**, the folk ensemble **Laz Slomovits & Friends**, the Ann Arbor **Bicycle Choir**, and storyteller **LaRon Williams**. Proceeds benefit Michigan Peaceworks. \$20 (students, \$10). **Dec. 10: Lucy Kaplansky.** This acclaimed singer-songwriter, a former clinical psychologist, is known for her strong, supple voice and her wryly engaging blues- and country-flavored ballads. "Kaplansky's voice has a tender, vulnerable, confessional quality, and she consistently uses it to her advantage in neatly tailored acoustic settings," says *Washington Post* reviewer Mike Joyce. Tonight's show includes several new songs, as well as songs from *Red Horse*, her new *Billboard*-charting CD, a collaboration with singer-songwriters John Gorka and Eliza Gilkyson on which they sing each other's songs. \$17.50. **Dec. 11: "Electric Guitar Summit": Cindy Cashdollar, Colin Linden, Bill Kirchen, & George Bedard.** Steel guitarist and dobro player Cashdollar has played with everyone from Asleep at the Wheel, Dylan, and Levon Helm to Ryan Adams, and Linden, of the Ontario supergroup Blackie & the Rodeo Kings, is a blues-rock songwriter. Ann Arbor native (and former Commander Cody guitarist) Kirchen mixes hard-core honky-tonk, rockabilly, acoustic swing, and countrypolitan balladry, and local guitar wizard Bedard is a master of rockabilly, country, Western swing, blues, R&B, surf, and soul. ("People in Ann Arbor might think all towns have a George Bedard," Kirchen once told WCBN DJ Dan Moray. "They don't.") \$30. **Dec. 12: Cairn to Cairn.** Celtic music and folk songs by the local trio of flutist Kelly McDermott, guitarist Terry Farmer, and bassist Rob Crozier. \$15. **Dec. 14: "December Songs: An Acoustic Holiday Celebration."** Two Ark favorites, San Francisco folk-rock singer-songwriter **Dan Navarro** and Hoboken-bred alt-country singer-songwriter **Amy Space**, are joined by 2 Nashville-based singer-songwriters, Jon Vezner (whose songs include "Where've You Been" and several other hits for his wife, country superstar Kathy Mattea) and Sally Barris, who's written hits for the likes of Lee Ann Womack ("Some Things I Know") and John Michael Montgomery ("My Christmas Wish"). The program includes originals as well as contemporary and traditional songs of the holiday season. \$20.

Dec. 15: Delbert McClinton. Sold out. **Dec. 16: Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band.** Sultry, high-energy calypso and reggae by this popular Trinidad-born, Ypsilanti-based percussion ensemble founded shortly after WW II by Hugh Borde and currently composed of Borde and several members of his family. \$15. **Dec. 17 & 18: "Crossroads Ceili."** Two evenings of Celtic music, song, and dance featuring several international and Detroit-area performers TBA. \$15. 7:30 p.m. **Dec. 19: Riders in the Sky.** This innovative, often comical Nashville-based quartet of ace musicians has revitalized the genre of the cowboy song. Inspired by the 1930s group the Sons of the Pioneers, the quartet includes 2 former Ann Arborites, Fred LaBour and onetime Herb David staffer Doug Green. They specialize in elaborate harmonizations of cowboy folk songs, western ballads, and sentimental Hollywood versions of the real thing—one of their CDs is a collection of Gene Autry tunes. Their repertoire also includes old-time fiddle pieces, some jazz numbers, virtuoso yodels, comic send-ups of western drama, and rope tricks. Tonight's show is "Christmas the Cowboy Way." \$20. **Dec. 31: Fred Eaglesmith.** This acclaimed Canadian country-rock singer-songwriter is known for brilliantly realized tales of rural and small-town life that are alternately dark, tender, terrifying, and savagely hilarious and are brought to life by canny rhythmic and melodic settings that draw freely on a variety of idioms from folk and bluegrass to rockabilly to dissonant avant-rock. His new CD *Cha Cha Cha* adds a strong dose of moody Tom Waits-style late-night balladry. \$20.

The B-Side

310 E. Washington

214-9995

This all-ages venue in the Neutral Zone teen center features a mix of touring, local, and teen bands, usually Sat., 7–11 p.m. Cover, dancing. **Dec. 4: The White Ravens.** See Crazy Wisdom. Opening acts are the Chelsea blues-inflected pop rock quartet **A Soft Serve Symphony**, the local pop-thrash quintet **Bury the Witness**, the metal band **Peace Be Still**, and the new Chelsea band **Pirates 4 Life**. Proceeds benefit STAND, a student-led division of the Genocide Intervention Network. **Dec. 10: Key to**

the Midway. Kalamazoo pop-punk band. Opening acts are the Livonia indie rock band **Scotch Mist**, and the Skyline High School alternative rock band **Quicksand Swimclub**. A benefit for the U-M chapter of To Write Love on Her Arms, a nonprofit that helps people struggling with depression and addiction. **Dec. 11: Space-Based Adventure and Barnyard Bro Down.** Double bill. Space-Based Adventure is a local ska band and Barnyard Bro Down is a new band whose music blends elements of "bro music" (a term coined by teens for music by the likes of John Mayer, Jack Johnson, and Dave Matthews) with old-time country. Also, a battle between well-known local hip-hop MCs TBA. **Dec. 18: "Capture the Breaker."** B-boy and B-girl breakdance crews from around the state compete for a \$150 cash prize. Also, performances by the local hip-hop ensemble **Celsius Electronics** and local hip-hop MCs **Gameboi** and **O.D.D.** 5–11 p.m.

The Black Pearl

302 S. Main

222-0400

This seafood and martini bar features live music Wed., 7–10 p.m. No cover, no dancing. **Dec. 1: Laith Al-Saadi.** See Savoy. **Dec. 8: Beth Stalker & Jim Rawlings.** An eclectic mix of styles, from blues, R&B, and jazz to rock and country, by the Detroit Music Award-winning duo of singer-songwriter Stalker and songwriter-guitarist Rawlings. **Dec. 15: Jody Raffoul.** Canadian pop-rock singer-songwriter who's been described as a hybrid of Bono and Bruce Springsteen. He is joined by backup vocalist and guitarist **Wes Buckley**. **Dec. 22: Chris Genteel.** Rock and soul covers and originals by this local singer-songwriter. He's accompanied by guitarist **Gregg Leonard**. **Dec. 29: Laith Al-Saadi.** See Savoy.

The Blind Pig

208 S. First St.

996-8555

This local music club features live music 5 nights a week, with a varied assortment of local and out-of-town rock 'n' roll, blues, reggae, and dance bands, 10:30 p.m.–1:30 a.m. (unless otherwise noted). Also, occasional early shows, usually 7–10 p.m. Karaoke

on Mon.; closed most Sun. If there's an opening act, the headliner usually goes on stage between 11:30 p.m. and midnight. Cover (except "Showcase Night"), dancing. If advance tickets are sold, they are available at the Michigan Union Ticket Office and all other Ticketmaster outlets. **Every Tues.** (except Dec. 7): **"Showcase Nights."** With 4 different young local bands each week. **Dec. 1: Phryme Rhyme Boss.** Local soul-inflected hip-hop MC. Opening acts are the local hip-hop collective **Tree City** and local hip-hop MCs **London Homicide**, **Versatal**, **Mason's Motif**, and **Tru Klasick**. **Dec. 2: Frontier Ruckus.** Orion Township experimental bluegrass-based folk-rock quartet that recently released the CD *Deadmalls & Nightfalls*. Opening acts are **Cotton Jones**, a Maryland psychedelic pop band, and **White Pines**, a Brooklyn (NY) quintet that plays atmospheric pop-rock. **Dec. 3: Ann Arbor Soul Club.** Classic soul music by the local DJ duo of Brad Hales and Robert Wells. **Dec. 4: The Muggs.** Downriver straight-ahead rock 'n' roll band. Opening acts are **Cetan Clawson Revolution**, a Monroe blues-rock band led by singer-songwriter and guitarist Clawson, and the **Laith Al-Saadi Trio** (see Live at PJ's). **Dec. 7: Langhorne Slim.** Brooklyn (NY) folk-rock singer-songwriter. Opening act is **Black Jake & the Carnies**, an Ypsilanti octet that calls its energetic, foot-stomping blend of punk, old-time music, and bluegrass "crabgrass." Advance tickets: \$10. **Dec. 8: Bryan Greenberg.** All ages admitted. L.A.-based indie pop-rock singer-songwriter best known as the star of the new HBO series *How to Make It in America*. Opening act is **Abigail Stauffer**, an indie pop-folk singer-songwriter. Advance tickets: \$10. 8 p.m.-midnight. **Dec. 9: Crown Royale.** L.A.-based hip-hop duo of Ann Arbor-bred MC Buff1 and DJ Rhettmatic. Opening acts are local hip-hop MC **Magestik Legend**, Detroit hip-hop MC **Gulity Simpson**, the local hip-hop duo **New Jack Kings**, and local hip-hop MC **Tres Styles**. **Dec. 10: The Mighty Diamonds.** Celebrated Jamaican roots reggae harmony trio most widely known from its 1982 international hit cover of "Pass the Koutchie." Opening acts are **Yellow Wall Dub Squad**, a world-music-oriented reggae quartet from Kingston, Jamaica, and **London Homicide**, a local hip-hop MC. **Dec. 11: Tickled Fancy Burlesque Co.** Popular local postpunk burlesque troupe. **Dec. 12: Mac Miller.** All ages admitted. 18-year-old hip-hop MC from Pittsburgh. Opening acts TBA. Advance tickets: \$13 (\$15 at the door). 8 p.m.-midnight. **Dec. 15: Thrill Train.** Local hip-hop/R&B dance music duo. Opening act TBA. **Dec. 16: Hollow Drive.** Jackson metal-inflected pop-rock quintet. Opening act TBA. **Dec. 17: TBA.** **Dec. 18: Nervous but Excited.** Lansing singer-songwriter duo of Kate Peterson and Sarah Cleaver, who combine a down-to-earth point of view, progressive politics, and resonant, ringing vocal harmonies. Opening acts are **Drag King Rebellion**, a local self-styled "gender performance" troupe, and **Jess Klein**, an Ypsilanti acoustic singer-songwriter and guitarist who plays rootsy folk-rock. **Dec. 22: TBA.** **Dec. 23: Suicide by Cop.** Local punk band. Opening act is **Hellmouth**, a Detroit thrash-metal band. **Dec. 29: Sore Eyes.** Memphis-based postpunk alternative rock band. Opening act TBA. **Dec. 30: Subgenius.** Local rock band. Opening act TBA. **Dec. 31: The Bang!** Dance party with this local DJ collective that plays garage and 70s rock.

The Circus

210 S. First St. 913-8890

This 2nd-floor downtown club features live music on Wed. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. No cover, no dancing (unless otherwise noted). Also, live music or karaoke on Fri. & Sat., 10 p.m.-2 a.m. in the street-level **Millennium Club** or basement **Cavern Club** (cover with dancing in these clubs). Karaoke, Thurs.-Sat., 10 p.m.-2 a.m. Age 21 & older admitted on Wed. & Thurs., age 18 & older on Fri. & Sat. **Dec. 1: The Henhouse Prowlers.** Traditional bluegrass by this Chicago band whose songs touch on such classic bluegrass themes such as love, loss, work, regret and death. **Dec. 8: Dragon Wagon.** Local experimental acoustic roots-music band. **Dec. 15: Ypsitucky Colonels.** Local garage dance band whose music mixes country, blues, funk, and rock flavors. Members are Corndaddy guitarist Will Stewart and former Boomerangs guitarist R Baker, bassist Eric Kelly from Dirt Road Logic, and former Destroy All Monsters drummer John Crawford. **Dec. 22: Luke Winslow-King Trio.** Americana trio led by Winslow-King, a New Orleans-bred singer-songwriter and guitarist who currently lives in Cadillac. His latest CD, *Old/New Baby (Fox on a Hill)*, was named a Top 10 Album of 2009 in the *American Songwriter* magazine editors poll, and *OffBeat* magazine says it "captures the allure of a speakeasy, the swagger of old Dixie, and the simple good-time charm of Western swing." **Dec. 29: TBA.** **Dec. 31: Killer Flamingos.** Rock 'n' roll covers and originals by

this popular, veteran band from Dearborn. Cover, dancing. In the Cavern Club.

Conor O'Neill's

318 S. Main 665-2968

Downtown Irish pub with live music Sun. 7:30-10 p.m. and Thurs. & Sat. 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m., and a DJ on Fri. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. Karaoke on Sun., 10 p.m.-2 a.m. No cover, no dancing. **Every Sun.: Traditional Irish Session.** All invited to join or listen to an instrumental jam session. Followed at 10 p.m. by karaoke. **Dec. 2: Park Side Wes.** Local blues-rock and funk cover trio. **Dec. 4: Joshua & Jeremy Sprague.** An eclectic mix of rock covers by these local brothers. **Dec. 9: Jerry Sprague Band.** Roots-rock band led by veteran local singer-guitarist Sprague, the father of Joshua and Jeremy. **Dec. 11: Michael May & the Messarounds.** Jazz-inflected blues and blues-rock by this veteran local quartet led by vocalist and blues harpist May. **Dec. 16: JIVA.** Groove-oriented, melodic pop-rock with ethereal guitar textures by this Detroit band. **Dec. 18: K.T.'s Alibi.** Redford pop-rock quartet led by vocalist Katie Jimmerson. **Dec. 23: Lucas Paul Band.** Local quartet led by pop-rock singer-songwriter Paul. **Dec. 30: Mossy Moran.** Traditional singer from Ireland.

Crazy Wisdom Tea Room

114 S. Main 665-9468

Tea room above Crazy Wisdom Bookstore features live music Thurs.-Sat., 8:30-10:30 p.m. No cover, no dancing. **Dec. 2: Jeff Tucker.** Acoustic singer-songwriter from Toledo who accompanies himself on guitar and harmonica and whose music blends rock, pop, and country with elements of Americana and jazz. **Dec. 3: The White Ravens.** Self-styled "pop-geek-cabaret" rock quartet, led by local siblings Amy and Will Bennett, whose influences range from the Beatles and Dylan to Bach and Brecht. They recently released the CD *Gargoyles and Weather Vanes*. Opening act is **Spencer Michaud**, a local singer-songwriter and acoustic guitarist whose music blends Motown, Tin Pan Alley, and folk. **Dec. 4: Corndaddy.** Local alt-country band led by singer-songwriters Kevin Brown and Jud Branam whose music mixes equal parts of Gram Parsons and Uncle Tupelo. **Dec. 9: Jim Cherewick.** Local folk-rock singer-songwriter. **Dec. 10: Tracy Kash Thomas and Acoustic Soul.** Double bill. Thomas is a Detroit singer-songwriter whose music draws on R&B, jazz, and roots music. Acoustic Soul is Blaise Glander and Kelly Wishart, a Detroit duo whose music draws on an range of influences from rock, pop, jazz and country to Motown and folk. **Dec. 11: Russ Glenn.** Detroit postpunk folk-rock singer-songwriter whose songs are known for their strong melodies and poetic interweaving of imagery and storytelling. **Dec. 16: The Bad Mics.** Local indie rock trio led by singer-guitarist Matt Mruzek. Opening act is **Estar Cohen**, a Toledo jazz vocalist. **Dec. 17: Anna Elizabeth.** Local teen singer-songwriter and acoustic guitarist. **Dec. 18: Sarah Swanson.** Soulful, anthemic indie rock by this local singer-songwriter with a new CD, *Dark Sunshine*, whose 1st single "Free" is getting airplay around the country. She is backed by a band that includes guitarists Patrick Thomas and Alex Anest, bassist Rod Capps, drummer Chuck Mauk, and backup vocalist Jennifer Buehrer. **Dec. 23, 30, & 31: No music.**

Creekside Grill and Bar

5827 Jackson Rd. 827-2737

The intimate basement bar in this restaurant in Scio Township features occasional live music. Cover, dancing. **Dec. 26: II-V-I Orchestra.** Veteran local big band, led by saxophonist David Swain, that plays late-1930s swing and 1940s R&B. With vocalists Jim Tarravantes and Patty O'Connor. 6:30-9 p.m.

Dreamland Theater

26 N. Washington

Ypsilanti

657-2337

This downtown Ypsilanti theater features occasional live music, 9-11 p.m. or later. Cover (usually a donation), no dancing. **Dec. 3: Divorce Party.** Ypsilanti noise-rock band. Opening acts are the Kalamazoo guitar-based free jazz band **Forget the Times**, the Grand Rapids pop quartet **Pistolbrides**, and the local self-styled "cosmic pop-rock" band **Supercollider**. **Dec. 10: Tyvek.** Detroit postpunk rock quintet. Opening acts are **Weirding Module**, a Detroit noise band, and another band TBA. **Dec. 17: Prussia.** Detroit pop-soul trio. Opening acts are the Ypsilanti ambient ensemble **Compartment**, the Lansing ambient folk-rock quartet **Fields of Industry**, and the local rock band **Team Ethic**.

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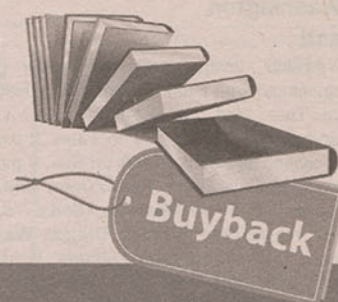
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Music at Nightspots

Elbow Room

6 S. Washington

Ypsilanti

This Ypsilanti tavern, reopened under new management and with a new sound system, features live music Tues., Wed., Fri., & Sat. 9:30 p.m.-2 a.m. Also, hip-hop and dubstep DJs on Thurs. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. and techno and dubstep DJs on Sun. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Cover, dancing. **Every Tues.: Open Jam.** All musicians invited. **Every Wed.: La Trinity.** Veteran local roots reggae band. **Dec. 3: Dragon Wagon.** See Circus. **Dec. 4: Hudson Falcons.** Working-class punk rock band from New Jersey. Opening acts are **Ironclad**, an Ypsilanti punk band, and **The Arrogant Bastards**, an Inkster punk-rock trio. **Dec. 10: Back Forty.** Local acoustic string jam quintet that plays a brand of twangy roots-folk music fused with elements of jazz and psychedelic rock that it calls "down-home funkgrass." **Dec. 11: TBA.** **Dec. 17: Northern Skies.** Acoustic bluegrass-tinged postpunk folk-rock quintet from Grand Rapids. **Dec. 18: TBA.** **Dec. 31: TBA.**

Espresso Royale Caffe

214 S. Main

668-1838

The downtown location of this popular coffeehouse features occasional live music. No cover, no dancing. **Dec. 4: No Excuses.** Classic rock, pop, and folk covers and originals by this local quartet. 8-10 p.m.

Goodnite Gracie

301 W. Huron

623-1443

Martini and cigar bar below Live at PJ's lounge. Live music or DJ Sat. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. & occasional other nights. Dancehall & reggaeton DJs Fri. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. Cover (except Fri.), dancing. **Dec. 3: FUBAR.** 6-piece band led by guitarist Randy Tessier and featuring vocalist Sophia Hanifi. Their repertoire is an eclectic mix of originals by Hanifi and Tessier and covers of everyone from the Everly Brothers, the Kinks, and the Yardbirds to Miles Davis and Steve Earle. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 4: "Underground Festival."** With bands TBA. **Dec. 11: Third Coast Kings.** Local horn-driven retro funk band that recently released its debut 45, "Give Me Your Love," on the Italian funk label Record Kicks. **Dec. 12: Classical Revolution Ann Arbor.** This local classical chamber music ensemble performs works by Haydn, Beethoven, Smetana, and Shostakovich, along with arrangements of Armenian folk songs for string quartet. 8:30-10:30 p.m. **Dec. 18: Lady Sunshine & the X Band.** See Guy Hollerin's.

Guy Hollerin's

3600 Plymouth Rd.

769-9800

The restaurant in the North Campus Holiday Inn features music on Sat. & occasional Fri., 8 p.m.-midnight. Cover, dancing. If tickets are available in advance, they are sold at the restaurant. **Dec. 4: Chris Canas Blues Revolution.** Detroit blues band fronted by Canas, a young blues vocalist and virtuoso guitarist. **Dec. 11: Steve Nardella Rock 'n' Roll Trio.** Ann Arbor's most passionate and compelling roots-rocker performs fiercely cathartic, blues-drenched reworkings of rock 'n' roll and rockabilly classics and obscure gems, along with some authentic Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker blues. **Dec. 18: The Bluescasters.** Veteran local blues and blues-rock quartet. **Dec. 31: Lady Sunshine & the X Band.** Popular local gospel-flavored blues band led by Lady Sunshine, a fiery, rich-voiced singer whose style blends elements of Aretha Franklin, Koko Taylor, and Denise LaSalle.

The Habitat Ultralounge

3050 Jackson Rd.

665-3636

The lounge at Weber's Inn features dance bands Tues.-Thurs., 8:45 p.m.-12:30 a.m., and Fri. & Sat., 8:45 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Also, DJ Mon., 7 p.m.-midnight, and solo pianists Tues.-Sun., 6-8:45 p.m. Dancing, no cover. **Dec. 1 & 2: Slice.** East Lansing pop dance quartet. **Dec. 3 & 4: Soulstice.** Hard-driving horn-fueled funk dance band from East Lansing. **Dec. 7-9: Dal Bouey.** Detroit R&B and neo-soul show band led by vocalist Bouey. **Dec. 10 & 11: Scoot Magoo.** Allen Park rock 'n' roll quintet. **Dec. 14-16: Green-Eyed Soul.** Windsor pop trio fronted by vocalists Melissa Danese and Fallon Deluca. **Dec. 17 & 18: Remedy.** Detroit dance band. **Dec. 22 & 23: Slice.** See above. **Dec. 28-30: Dave Hamilton.** Pop covers by this versatile solo guitarist.

Dec. 31: Collision 6. Detroit rock quintet that plays originals and 80s and 90s covers.

The Jolly Pumpkin

311 S. Main

913-2730

The 2nd-floor lounge in this downtown brewpub features live music Thurs. No cover, no dancing. **Every Thurs: Open Mike.** All acoustic musicians and vocalists invited. Hosted by local singer-songwriter Zachariah Griffin. 9:15 p.m. until everyone who signed up has a chance to perform.

Keystone Underground

Martini Bar

200 W. Michigan Ave.

544-9960

This basement lounge beneath J. Neil's Mongolian Grille features live music Mon. 8:15-11 p.m., Wed. 10 p.m.-2 a.m., Thurs., 8-11 p.m., & Fri. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Also, DJs on Sat., 8 p.m.-2 a.m. Cover, no dancing. **Every Mon.: Paul Keller Orchestra.** Award-winning 15-piece big band led by bassist Keller and featuring vocalist Susan Chastain. **Every Wed.: Open Mike.** All musicians invited. Also, a set by a guest band each week. **Every Thurs.: Edward Nakayama Quartet.** Local jazz ensemble led by guitarist Nakayama. **Every Fri.: "Underground Roots."** With live bands TBA.

Live at PJ's

102 S. First St.

623-1443

This lounge features live music Sun. 5-8:30 p.m. and Thurs. 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m., along with Thurs. & Fri. 6:30-9 p.m. happy hours. Hip-hop DJs (or occasional live music) Fri. & Sat., 11 p.m.-2 a.m. Cover (except happy hour), dancing. **Every Sun.: Phil Ogilvie's Rhythm Kings.** This local 10-piece big band is one of the few to specialize in the old-time big-band music of the late 1920s and early 1930s associated with Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver. Arrangements by the renowned early-jazz pianist James Dapogny and tubaist Chris Smith. **Every Thurs.: Laith Al-Saadi Trio.** An eclectic mix of jazz, blues, R&B, Motown, and pop, including many originals, by a trio led by this local singer-guitarist. **Dec. 2: Gary Quackenbush & the New SRC.** This band led by former SRC guitarist Quackenbush performs songs from that influential Ann Arbor-based rock band—like "I'm So Glad," "Black Sheep," and "Bolero"—and other vintage rock and blues-rock songs in the same vein. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 3: "WEMU 5:01 Jazz Series."** With **Hal Davis & HiDef**, a local quartet that plays everything from hard-swinging post-bop and Latin jazz to 70s-style rock fusion. 5-8 p.m. **Dec. 9: The BlueRays.** Local blues band led by guitarist Dave Kaftan. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 10: Drivin' Sideways.** Veteran local band fueled by Pontiac Pete Ferguson's alternately soulful and ornery vocals. Their country-based repertoire still features lots of classic honky-tonk, but they also cover everyone from Chuck Berry and Johnny Burnette to the Beatles and James Brown. With guitarist George Bedard, bassist Chris Goerke, drummer Mark Newbound, and keyboardist Jim King. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 16: The Sound Dogs.** An eclectic, danceable mix of blues, jazz, and vintage rock by this new local sextet led by guitarist Jack Scheerer and fronted by vocalist Surry Scheerer. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 17: Danny James Band.** Local rockabilly band. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 30: Rubie & the Red Hots.** Rockabilly, blues, country, and rock 'n' roll by this local quintet led by guitarist David Swain and featuring vocalist Kathy Butler. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 31: Drivin' Sideways.** See above. 6-9:30 p.m. **Dec. 31: "New Year's Eve Two-in-One Mega Bash."** With bands and DJs on both floors.

The Necto

516 E. Liberty

994-5436

This popular dance club features local and national DJs 4 nights a week, Mon. & Thurs.-Sat., 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Also, occasional live shows. Cover, dancing. **Dec. 9: MEDMA Presents Impulse!** The Michigan Electronic Dance Music Association's monthly showcase of progressive house, trance, and electronic dance music TBA.

Old Town

122 W. Liberty

662-9291

This downtown corner bar features live music Sun. & occasional other nights, 8-10 p.m. No dancing, no cover. The performers are usually accompanied by various drop-in friends. **Dec. 5: Dave Boutette.** Veteran folk-rock singer-guitarist whose genial

songs about the small ups and downs of ordinary life draw on a range of influences from Chuck Berry to Paul Westerberg. **Dec. 12: The Tsars.** Local Tiki-flavored surf-rock lounge quartet. **Dec. 19: John Latini.** Acoustic rock-based originals by this veteran local rock 'n' roll singer-songwriter. **Dec. 26: Nathan K.** Local indie pop-folk singer-songwriter who recently released his debut CD, *Newspapers & Prayers*.

Oz's Music Environment

1920 Packard

662-8283

This storefront next to Oz's music store features live music most Tues. 7:30-9:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted). Cover by donation, no dancing. **Dec. 7: "Songwriters Open Mike."** All songwriters invited. Hosted by Jim Novak. **Dec. 14: "Anything Goes Open Stage & Song Circle."** All musicians invited. Hosted by Laura MacKimmie. **Dec. 28: "Ukulele Jam."** Musicians of all ability levels invited.

The Quarter Bistro

300 S. Maple

929-9200

This west-side restaurant features live music Sat. 6:30-9 p.m., and occasional other nights. Also, a DJ on Fri., 6-11 p.m. No cover, no dancing. **Dec. 4: Keffi.** Band that plays traditional Greek party music. **Dec. 11: All Directions.** Canton quintet led by keyboardist Michael Ager and featuring vocalist Kimberly Ringer that plays a versatile mix of R&B, blues-rock, and jazz. **Dec. 18: Bob Skon Trio.** Folk-rock covers and originals by this trio led by Skon, a local singer-songwriter known for his wry songs about love and loss.

Sava's State Street Cafe

216 S. State

623-2233

This campus-area restaurant features a DJ with some live music, Sun. 10 p.m.-midnight, along with occasional live music on other nights, 10 p.m.-1 a.m. No cover, dancing. **Every Sun.: Jamie Register.** This versatile local soul-funk singer-bassist spins records and sometimes plays some live music.

The Savoy

23 N. Washington

Ypsilanti

485-4444

This downtown Ypsilanti club features live music Sun. & Tues. 8-11 p.m. and Mon., Wed., Fri., & Sat. 9:30 p.m.-2 a.m. Also, karaoke on Thurs. 11 p.m.-1 a.m. and DJ on Sun. & Tues. 11 p.m.-2 a.m. Cover, dancing. **Every Sun.: Todd Osborne.** This Detroit-area electronic musician spins techno, electronic, funk, and soul records. **Every Mon.: Laith Al-Saadi.** Soulful acoustic rock and blues covers and originals by this local singer-guitarist. **Dec. 1: The Ben Daniels Band.** Chelsea folk-rock trio led by singer-songwriter and guitarist Daniels. Opening acts are **Derby Mama**, an Ypsilanti experimental blues quartet, and **Buttonsphere**, an Ypsilanti indie rock quartet. **Dec. 3: Charlie Slick.** Local Gary Numan-inspired electro-pop singer-songwriter. Opening acts are **Johnny III Band**, a Detroit punk-rock band, and **Bad Indians**, an Ypsilanti psychedelic soul band. **Dec. 4: TBA.** **Dec. 5: Ben Miller.** Veteran local postpunk avant-noise musician who creates textured, cacaphonic sound fields on a deconstructed electric guitar with multiple pickups. Opening act is **Beak Full of Rubies**, a local electro-acoustic ambient noise trio. 8-11 p.m. **Dec. 7: TBA.** **Dec. 8: Rogue Satellites.** Detroit New Wave electronica garage duo. Opening act is **Erlenbeck & Fader**, a Detroit pop-rock band led by Johnny Headband singer-keyboardist Chad Thompson. **Dec. 9: The Bluescasters.** See Guy Hollerin's. 8-11 p.m. **Dec. 10: Dave Sharp's Secret Seven.** Straight-ahead jazz by this ensemble led by veteran local bassist Sharp. Opening act is **Sean Ike**, a Detroit funk-soul singer-songwriter. **Dec. 11: "Elbow Deep."** Gay and lesbian gala with Detroit DJ **Humanfly**. **Dec. 12: Hello Victor.** Kalamazoo acoustic rock quintet. Opening act is **The Wall Clocks**, a Detroit indie rock band. 8-11 p.m. **Dec. 14: "Absolute Beginners."** DJs Tim Sendra and Fred Thomas play 60s-style pop music. **Dec. 15: Citizen Smile.** Detroit indie pop-rock band. Opening acts are **The Boys Themselves**, a local pop band, and **Skelton-Luns**, a local guitar-based rock quartet. **Dec. 16: The White Ravens.** See Crazy Wisdom. Opening acts are **Woody Pines**, an Asheville (NC) old-time blues, jazz, and ragtime quartet, and **Alejandro O'Leary**, a local rock 'n' roll singer-songwriter who has been compared to Liz Phair and Lucinda Williams. Her new CD, *Nothing Out Loud*, has been

described as "chock-full of uncomplicated pop songs that waver between 60s joie de vivre and a knowing Liz Phair vibe." 8-11 p.m. **Dec. 17: Gas for Less.** Local alt-country honky-tonk and rockabilly band led by singer-songwriter (and former Lucky Haskins frontman) Ryan Racine. Opening acts are **John Holk & the Sequins**, a Ferndale psychedelic honky-tonk band fronted by the singer-songwriter duo of Carri Shepard and Ann Arbor native John Holkeboer, and **Jeni Lee Richey & the Great Tribulation**, a local folk noir and neo-honky-tonk ensemble led by singer-songwriter Richey. **Dec. 18: Chris Bathgate & the Young Bucks.** Indie rock band led by Bathgate, a talented local singer-songwriter who writes heartfelt, poetic story songs in a variety of moods. Opening acts are the Kalamazoo acoustic pop-folk and blues trio **Graham Parsons & the Go Rounds**, the local indie pop-folk trio **Gun Lake**, and the Grand Rapids pop band **Wonder Caverns**. **Dec. 21: TBA.** **Dec. 22: Dream Diary.** Brooklyn (NY) pop trio whose influences range from Phil Spector to the Smiths. Opening acts are local indie rock quartet **Swimsuit**, Brighton pop-folk singer-songwriter **JT Royster**, and the Chicago-based jam-oriented folk-rock duo **The Skis**. **Dec. 23: Bars of Gold.** Ferndale pop-rock quintet. Opening act is **Jehovah's Witness Protection Program**, a local rock 'n' roll duo. 8-11 p.m. **Dec. 28: "Absolute Beginners."** See above. **Dec. 29: TBA.** **Dec. 30 & 31: "Mittenfest V."** First 2 of a 4-night showcase of 60 current and former local bands in a wide spectrum of genres. Daily lineups TBA at mittenfest.org. A benefit for the nonprofit youth tutoring and writing center 826michigan. \$7 per night (\$25 festival pass). 5 p.m.-2 a.m.

Silvio's Organic Pizza

715 North University

214-6666

This campus-area restaurant features live music, Fri. 7-9 p.m. and occasional Sat. 7:30-10 p.m. No cover, no dancing. **Dec. 3: Ed Nakayama.** Jazz standards by this local guitarist. **Dec. 4: "Chamber Music Jam Session."** Hosted by the local chamber ensemble **Classical Revolution Ann Arbor**. **Dec. 10: Team Love.** Jazz, swing, and Latin standards and originals by the local trio of singer-songwriter and bassist Tim Berla, clarinetist and percussionist Charles Dayringer, and guitarist Kip Godwin. With guest vocalist **Julia Papastavridis**. **Dec. 17: The Dellwoods.** Local jazz quartet. **Dec. 31: No music.**

Tap Room

201 W. Michigan

Ypsilanti

482-5320

This popular downtown Ypsilanti tavern features live music Wed., 9-11:30 p.m., Thurs. 8 p.m.-midnight, & Sat. 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Also, DJ with Latin dance music, Wed. 9 p.m.-1 a.m. No cover, dancing. **Every Tues.: Alexander Graham.** Jazz ensemble led by this postbebop alto saxophonist, a 1989 Community High grad and current EMU artist-in-residence known for his distinctively bright, clear tone and his inventive rhythmic and harmonic sense. With different sit-in guests each week. **Every Thurs.: Electric Open Mike.** Hosted by **The Martindales**, a local band led by singer-guitarist Brian Brickley that plays blues and rock covers and originals. All electric musicians invited. **Dec. 4: "Crossroads Fund-Raiser."** A benefit for the Ypsilanti summer music festival with local bands TBA. **Dec. 11: No music.** **Dec. 18: The Martindales.** See above.

Vinology

110 S. Main

222-9841

This wine bar and restaurant features live jazz, Thurs. 9 p.m.-midnight, and occasional other nights. No cover, no dancing (unless otherwise noted). **Dec. 2: Beth Stalker.** Jazz standards by this versatile, soulful Detroit vocalist. She is accompanied by Cliff Monear on piano and bass and saxophonist Mark Kieme. **Dec. 9: Paul Keller Trio.** High-energy mainstream jazz by this ensemble led by bassist Keller. **Dec. 16: Miles Brown Trio.** Local jazz trio led by bassist Brown. **Dec. 23 & 30: No music.** **Dec. 31: Ellen Rowe Trio.** Jazz ensemble led by pianist Rowe, a U-M music professor. With bassist Paul Keller and drummer Pete Siers.

Zal Gaz Grotto

2070 W. Stadium

663-1202

This Masonic social and service club hosts live music Tues. 5:30-8:30 p.m. Cover, dancing. **Every Tues.: Paul Klinger's Easy Street Jazz Band.** Dixieland and swing by this local ensemble led by saxophonist and trumpeter Klinger.

Classifieds & Personals

Personals Key

A=Asian	J=Jewish
B=Black	L=Letters
C=Christian	LTR=Long Term Relationship
D=Divorced	M=Male
F=Female	ND=Nondrinker
G=Gay	NS=Nonsmoker
H=Hispanic	☎=Phone Calls
H/WP=Height & Weight Proportionate	P=Professional
ISO=In Search Of	S=Single
	W=White

Women Seeking Men

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

PERSONAL LETTER RESPONSE
\$3 per letter
See Instruction Box.

SWF, 50, seeks SM who will go places with me, such as St. Mary's church, Comedy Showcase, and out to eat. Please pay for me in exchange for friendship and real love. Smoker and drinker. 5802

Bright, slim, caring **SWPF** ISO true gentleman for friendship, maybe more. RSVP soon. 5786

Cute, fit girl teddy bear ISO LTR with boy teddy bear 45+. For dancing to the Blues, cassoulet by the fire, more. 5794

Men Seeking Women

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

PERSONAL LETTER RESPONSE
\$3 per letter
See Instruction Box.

Successful farmer, 51, humble, patient, self-confident, spontaneous, likes classical music and reading. Seeks educated woman with common sense who can cook. 5801

Bright, bearded, boyish-Koalabearish **SWM** professor, 62, likes chats, cats, cuddling, cinema, concerts, cuisine, (Leonard) Cohen, travel, seeks LTR. 5793

General Personals

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

Single Parents—New Friends! Fun social, family and learning events in a safe environment! Visit Parents Without Partners, www.aapwp.org.

For Sale

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

A brand new, queen, pillowtop mattress set. Still in plastic. \$160. (734) 730-3419.
Teeter hang-up inversion table. New 2010. \$200. (517) 223-3894.

Entertainment

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

★ **CLASSICAL HARP MUSIC** ★
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Holiday parties too!
Deborah Gabrion, (734) 417-6969

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• Mail or walk-in: 201 Catherine Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Observer Personals Ads are also posted online at:

arborlist.com—totally free classifieds, and arborweb.com—Ann Arbor online

Please call with any questions or comments: (734) 769-3175

We reserve the right to reject, cancel, or modify any advertising and to determine the classification of individual ads.

Lessons & Workshops

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

ANN ARBOR AREA PIANO TEACHERS GUILD for referrals to qualified professional piano teachers. All levels and ages, 665-5346. aaptg.googlepages.com.

Piano and Guitar Lessons. Double degreed music teacher. Pittsfield Township. (734) 646-2740.

PIANO LESSONS—Your home, all levels. Experienced, perceptive teacher. DMA U-M. Info: (734) 482-4663.

PIANO LESSONS AGE 5 & UP Prof. piano teacher, U-M Music School grad. Member of Piano Teachers Guild. Visit my website: www.McPianoLady.com. Mary Ann McCulloch, (734) 604-0942. Email: mcplanolady@aol.com.

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(734) 904-4663

New Downtown Location!

*Ann Arbor's stained glass & supply shop
*Mosaic Classes—All ages
<http://GlassShackStudio.blogspot.com>
haley@glassshackstudio.com

Miscellaneous

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

Climate Control Indoor Storage
490 S. Maple, Ann Arbor. Next to Kroger.
662-5262. www.ccindoorstorage.com.

I SPY CONTEST

Can you identify the glimpse of Ann Arbor in the photo on p. 91? If you can, you could win a \$25 gift certificate to spend at an Ann Arbor Observer advertiser of your choice. One winner will be drawn from all correct entries received by noon, December 10. No phone entries, please. Send your answer to: I Spy, Ann Arbor Observer, 201 Catherine, AA 48104. Fax: 769-3375; email: backpage@aaobserver.com (include address and phone number and put I Spy in the subject line).

Services

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

★ **Construction Debris—Recycled** ★
Roofing, lumber, carpeting, and misc.

TRC HAULING, 665-6895

Health

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

Affordable Massage for Every Body Deep tissue, sports, pregnancy, injury, rehab, Reiki, on-site/event. Nationally certified, 15 years' exp. Clinic on west side. Call Carolann @ Relax & Renew, (734) 368-2138. Holiday Gift Certificates.

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Anxiety?

www.annarboranxietyrelief.com

Home

The Classifieds deadline for the January issue is December 10.

Professional Premium Handyman Plus

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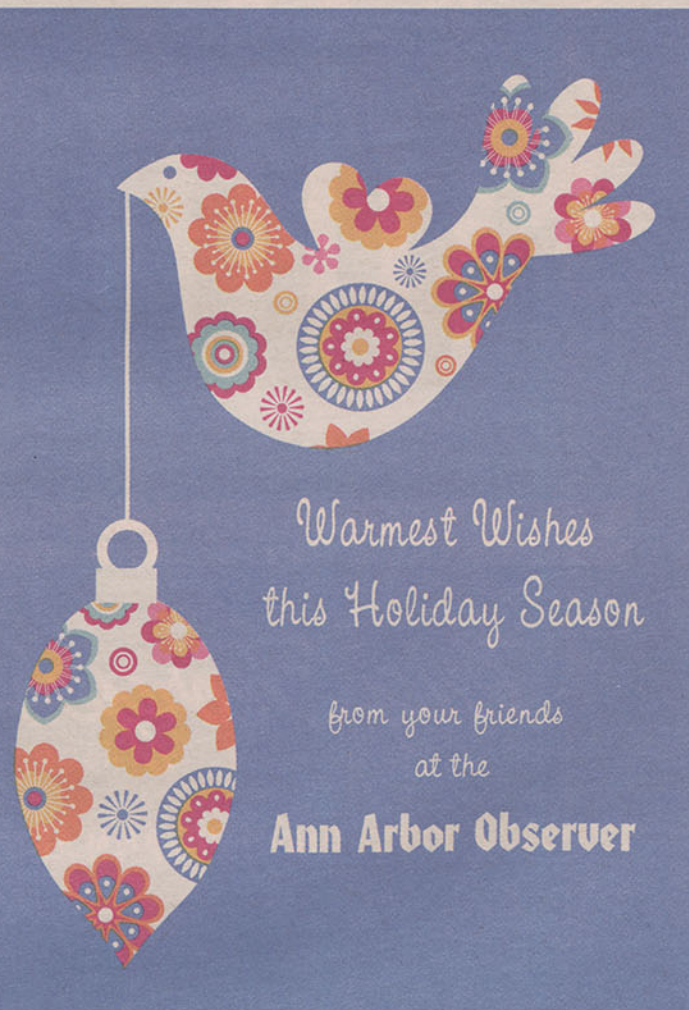
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NE ANN ARBOR - Incredible 32 acre estate property just minutes to Ann Arbor, U-M, and hospitals. This property is breathtaking. This custom-built home rests in the heart of mature forest. Enjoy complete privacy and harmony with nature with the convenience of a premier location. The 4-bedroom, 3½-bath home features soaring ceilings, walls of glass, and extensive upgrades. \$995,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP - Serenity surrounds you at this stunning 4-bedroom, 4-full, 2-half-bath custom-built home on 7.5 gorgeous acres. The property is very special featuring a flowing stream, forest, extensive landscaping, decks, and patio. The home features only the finest throughout including two-story foyer with sweeping stair, gourmet kitchen, two-story great room, luxury master suite, and finished walkout lower level. \$995,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



WALNUT RIDGE - Incredible contemporary gem in one of Ann Arbor's most sought after neighborhoods. This home features incredible flair and features. Highlighted by the one-of-a-kind kitchen with stainless steel cabinets, professional grade appliances, and concrete counter tops. Features include all maple floors on the first floor, two-story great room, and luxury master suite with dream bath and closet. \$769,999. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



GLENBOROUGH - Incredible 6-bedroom, 4-full, two-half-bath custom-built home by Harris on one of the best lots. Enjoy views of woods and nature from the large deck. Great custom detail including rich maple kitchen with granite counters, large family room with fireplace and 11' ceiling, sun room, den, luxury master suite with 2 walk-in closets, and finished walk-out basement with large rec room, bedroom, and bath. \$749,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



STONEBRIDGE - Gorgeous 4-bedroom, 4.4-bath custom-built home by Harris on the 9th fairway at Stonebridge. This home is the essence of quality. Incredible landscaping and multi-tier brick paver patio. Features a two-story family room with masonry fireplace, cherry kitchen with granite and stainless steel appliances, den with built-ins, luxury master suite with spa-like bath, and finished lower level with rec room. \$599,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



ANN ARBOR SCHOOLS - Stunning 2005-built 4-bedroom, 3 ½-bath home in Pheasant Hollow. This perfectly designed home has all the features and amenities you've been hoping for. Great lot with nice landscaping, 2 decks, and pastoral views. Interior is sharp and features two-story family room, custom kitchen with granite counters, and luxury master suite. \$569,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



EARHART - Stunning 4-bedroom, 2½-bath contemporary on a totally wooded ½ acre lot in one of Ann Arbor's most desired subs. This timeless architect designed home has undergone an extensive renovation and is just stunning. Wall to ceiling glass in most rooms, custom kitchen, master suite with attached study, and finished walkout lower level. \$549,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SAGINAW HILLS - Striking 4-bedroom, 2 ½-bath water front home in one of Ann Arbor's most desired subs. Enjoy peaceful pond views from the oversized deck on this beautiful one acre lot. Home has a nice contemporary flair and features an open kitchen and family room with water views, living room with vaulted ceiling, master suite with walk-in closet and luxury bath, and finished basement. \$499,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SALINE ESTATES - This like-new 4-bedroom, 2 ½-bath custom-built home rests on a peaceful .85 acre lot in one of Saline's most desired subs. Great yard with extensive landscaping and a large deck. The interior features two-story foyer, large formal living room and dining room, den, open kitchen with granite counters, family room with vaulted ceiling, luxury master suite with sitting room, and huge closet. \$419,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



PINCKNEY - Gorgeous 4-bedroom, 3-bath custom-built home with 90 ft. of frontage on Highland Lake. This home is just paradise with panoramic views of lake and 11,000 acres of state owned land. The interior is loaded featuring oversized great room, maple kitchen with granite, and dream master suite. \$399,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



LAKE FOREST - Stunning 4-bedroom, 3 ½-bath former builder's model home in one of Ann Arbor's most desired subs. Great lot with extensive landscaping, large deck, and patio. Interior features two-story family room, ample hardwood floors, den, kitchen with granite counter tops, nice master suite with newly remodeled bath, and finished walkout basement with large rec space, study, and bath. \$369,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SANDHILL ESTATES - Top quality, custom-built 5-bedroom, 3 ½-bath ranch on a peaceful acre lot in one of Grass Lake's most desired subs. Great home inside and out. Exterior features brick and stone exterior, extensive landscaping, and deck overlooking the rolling country side. Interior is special with custom features throughout. Great room with stone fireplace, open kitchen, luxury master suite, and finished basement. \$364,900 Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SALINE - Oversized 4-bedroom, 2 ½-bath ranch on a private 2.75 acre lot just minutes to downtown Saline and US-23. Wonderful setting features mature trees, extensive landscaping, and in-ground pool. Interior is spacious and features sunken living room with fireplace, oversized family room with room for game table and TV area, open kitchen, nice master suite, and lots of storage. \$329,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



UM CAMPUS/KERRYTOWN - Great rental property walking distance to UM campus, UM hospital, Kerrytown, and downtown Ann Arbor. Strong rental history and great condition highlight this easy income property. Property has two 1-bedroom apartments. \$299,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



LOCH ALPINE - Quality built 4-bedroom, 2 ½-bath home with panoramic views of Ann Arbor Country Club golf course. Wonderful hill top setting gives some of the best views you'll see. Interior features great room with vaulted ceiling, open kitchen with granite counters and stainless steel appliances, luxury master suite, and finished basement. \$299,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



LINCOLN SCHOOLS - Enjoy your own 40-acre private get-away in this modest 3-bedroom, 1-bath home. The land is spectacular and features open meadows and dense woods. Potential for land split also exists. Perfect home for an outdoor enthusiast. Home is older and has lots of charm. \$299,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



VALLEY RANCH - Stunning 4-bedroom, 3-bath condo on one of the best settings in Valley Ranch. This unit is just perfect and features very upscale and inviting space. Features include great room with vaulted ceiling and fireplace, spacious kitchen with granite counter tops, luxury master suite, first-floor den, and finished lower level with rec room, 2-bedroom, and bath. \$279,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



WEST SIDE ANN ARBOR - Fabulous owner occupied duplex within walking distance to downtown and U-M medical campus. This building features incredible flair. Each unit has high vaulted ceilings and unique loft area. Larger unit has beautiful fireplace, nice master suite, sun room, and loft. \$259,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



PITTSFIELD TWP - Very spacious 4-bedroom, 2 ½-bath library colonial in this popular east Ann Arbor neighborhood. Great lot with extensive landscaping, large deck, and quiet backyard. This home has a wonderful floor plan and many nice upgrades. Features include kitchen with granite counter tops, oversized family room with fireplace, first-floor den, formal living room and dining room, and nice master suite. \$239,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



CHELSEA - Very sharp 4-bedroom, 2 ½-bath home in Chelsea Ridge. This is a great home in a great neighborhood walking distance to schools and downtown Chelsea. Nice lot features extensive landscaping and large deck. The interior features a great room with vaulted ceiling, large open kitchen, first-floor master suite, large upstairs bedrooms, and finished rec room in the basement. \$229,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



NEW LISTING - WHISPERING PINES - Perfect 3-bedroom, 2-bath ranch style condo backing to trees and the golf course. This unit is gorgeous and is highlighted by the remodeled kitchen with granite counter tops, great room with vaulted ceiling and fireplace, luxury master suite with walk-in closet, and flex use den/3rd bedroom. Low Hamburg Township taxes. \$169,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP - Spectacular 4-bedroom, 3 ½-bath completely updated home in one of Lincoln School's most popular neighborhoods. This home rests on a quiet lot with fenced backyard and large deck bordering common land. The interior is sharp and features large kitchen, open family room with fireplace, nice master suite, and finished lower level with rec room and bath. \$159,900 Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SALINE - Incredible 3-bedroom, 1-bath brick ranch on a quiet, low traffic street in one of Saline's most desired subs. This home has undergone an extreme home make over, everything is new. Features include remodeled kitchen with maple cabinets and granite counter tops, refinished hardwood floors, new roof, new windows, new bath, and finished basement. \$149,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



MANCHESTER - This 3-bedroom, 1-bath ranch style home includes 2,200 square feet of living space. Walk to downtown Manchester from this well maintain home on a quiet, tree-lined street. Features include large living room with coved ceilings, open kitchen, sun room that opens to an in-ground pool, and spacious bedrooms. \$139,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



NW ANN ARBOR - This is one of the finest homes you will ever see. Striking Arch design with Idaho Blue Stone and Redwood exterior, exceptional landscaping, and covered outdoor patio with fireplace. Interior features cherry cabinets, floors, trim, and doors throughout. Gourmet kitchen, spa-like master suite, and finished lower level with rec space, sauna, and full kitchen. Five-car heated garage. \$1,495,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



NE ANN ARBOR - This 4-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath home is one of the finest custom built homes you will ever see. Incredible craftsmanship. Nestled on a wooded 2.4 acre lot. Extensive landscaping, patio, and putting green. Home has every amenity including a two-story great room, sun room, dream kitchen, luxury bath, and the ultimate finished basement. \$1,195,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



ANN ARBOR - Very special 4-bedroom, 4 1/2-bath custom-built, builder's own home backing to Polo Fields golf course. Gorgeous brick and stone exterior, extensive landscaping, and the finest covered patio with outdoor kitchen you will see. Interior is top-of-the-line in every way. Custom kitchen, extensive moldings, high ceilings, and luxury amenities in every room of the home. \$1,195,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



NW ANN ARBOR - This gorgeous, custom-built home by Henry Landau rests on a 8+ acre country estate. Grounds include extensive landscaping, circle drive, and outbuilding. Home is rock solid with an all-brick exterior. Interior features include two-story living room, striking dining room with barrel ceiling, custom kitchen, dream master suite and finished walk-out basement. \$1,195,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



DIXBORO FARMS - Stunning 4-bedroom, 4-bath new construction on a gorgeous 2-acre estate lot in this popular NE Ann Arbor neighborhood. Quality features everywhere including all brick exterior, cherry kitchen with granite counters, extensive custom molding and trim, luxury first-floor master suite, and finished walkout basement. \$749,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



CHELSEA - This incredible timber frame home rests on a 12-acre estate type property with access to two private lakes. The land is spectacular with mature trees, gorgeous water views, and ample wildlife. The home was custom-built to the highest standards seen. Features include two-story atrium room with walls of glass, kitchen with granite counter tops, reclaimed staircase, incredible master suite, and radiant heat. \$729,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



TRAVIS POINTE - Stunning 4-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath timeless custom-built home overlooking water and the golf course at Travis Pointe. Incredible grounds with an incredible view. Home features soaring ceilings with walls of glass, new kitchen with professional grade appliances, two-story stone fireplace, luxury master suite, and finished walk-out basement. \$649,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



DEXTER - This incredible estate property rests on one of the most beautiful settings you will ever see. Enjoy extensive gardens, exotic plantings, ponds, and covered entertaining areas highlight the exterior. Interior features extensive renovation including dream kitchen, vaulted ceilings, den, luxurious master suite, and separate 900 sq. ft. guest room. You will be impressed. \$599,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



BROOKVIEW HIGHLANDS - Gorgeous custom-built 4-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath home on a spacious acre+ lot in one of Saline's most desired subs. Wonderful setting features extensive landscaping, patio, and screened porch. The interior is spectacular with dramatic open entry, living room with vaulted ceiling, cherry kitchen with granite and stainless steel appliances, and dream master suite with spa-like bath. \$499,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



HUNTERS RIDGE - Incredible 4-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath custom-built ranch on a quiet cul-de-sac lot. This home features incredible size and proportion. Oversized rooms, high vaulted ceilings, and nice upgrades highlight this home. Interior features include open kitchen, great room with vaulted ceiling, luxury master bedroom, and finished walkout basement. \$499,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SALINE - Absolutely gorgeous 4-bedroom, 4 1/2-bath, custom-built builder's model home in Huntington Woods. This home is loaded with quality upgrades throughout. Features include two-story foyer and family room, cherry kitchen with 11' ceilings and granite counters, extensive trim and molding, luxury master suite, and finished walkout basement. \$459,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



STONEBRIDGE - Custom built 4-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath home on the #3 Green at Stonebridge. Great lot features extensive landscaping, 2 decks, and one of the nicest golf views you will find. Quality built home has mostly brick exterior, two-story great room with fireplace, den, spacious kitchen, luxury first-floor master suite, upstairs bedroom suite, and jack-n-jill bath. \$429,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SALINE - This home is a gem. Incredible property backing to 100s of acres of protected farmland. Exterior features extensive landscaping, deck, patio, and one of the most scenic views you will find. Interior includes great room with vaulted ceiling, remodeled bath with custom cabinets and granite counters, first-floor master suite, and finished lower level with great flex-use rec space. \$359,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



NEW LISTING - SALINE - Great custom-built 4-bedroom, 4 1/2-bath home in Kelli Meadows. Wonderful lot features extensive landscaping, large deck, in-ground pool, and backs to woods. The interior includes living room with vaulted ceiling, open kitchen, family room with fireplace, luxury master suite, and finished basement with rec room, bar, and bath. \$345,000. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



TRAVIS POINTE - This stunning 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo is the nicest Travis Pointe condo to ever hit the open market. Great setting adjoining trees and open space. The interior has been completely renovated and features extensive Brazilian cherry floor, cherry kitchen cabinets with granite and professional grade appliances, luxury master suite with vaulted ceiling and remodeled bath, and many other updates. \$339,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



EAST HORIZONS - Very nice 4-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath home on a quiet cul-de-sac lot in one of Saline School's most popular neighborhoods. This home has a great setting with oversized backyard, large deck, and extensive landscaping. The interior includes two-story great room with hardwood floor, open kitchen with ample cabinets, first-floor master suite with brand new luxury bath, and additional bonus room upstairs. \$339,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



NEW LISTING - SALINE - Renovated 5-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath farmhouse on a peaceful 1.5 acre setting one mile south of Saline. Great setting with vista views of farms. Home has lots of updates including new kitchen with cherry cabinets and granite counters, large family room, flex use den, oversized master suite with attached bath and walk-in closet, great deck, and three-car garage. You will love it. \$289,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



THE RAVINES - Super sharp 4-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath home on a quiet cul-de-sac lot backing to wooded common area. The incredible exterior features extensive landscaping, large deck, and brick paver patio. Interior is wonderful and features vaulted ceilings, open kitchen, great décor, and finished basement with rec room, bedroom, bath, and wet bar. \$289,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



LAKE FOREST - Great 4-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath home in one of Ann Arbor's most popular subs. This home is just perfect inside and out and features great room with vaulted ceiling and full height brick fireplace, large first-floor master suite, spacious bedrooms, and flex-use rec room in the lower level. Nice landscaping and huge deck. You will love it! \$284,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



LAKE FOREST HIGHLANDS - Very sharp 3-bedroom, 2-bath, 2 half-bath home on a quiet cul-de-sac lot in one of Ann Arbor's most desired subs. The current owner has made a significant investment in this home to make it one of the finest you will see. Features include extensive landscaping, large deck, 4-season sunroom, great room with vaulted ceiling, new kitchen, first-floor master suite, and finished basement. \$279,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



BRIARWOOD AREA CONDO - Walk to shopping and restaurants from this perfect 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo. This unit is loaded and is highlighted by the cherry kitchen with granite counter tops, open living room, nice master suite, den/exercise area, and garage. You will love it. Easy commute to UM campus and downtown. \$199,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



LINCOLN SCHOOLS - Classic 4-bedroom, 1-bath turn-of-the-century farmhouse on 3 peaceful acres just minutes to I-94 and US-23. This home is in need of substantial updating but is structurally sound and loaded with charm and character. You will love the oversized moldings and hardwood floors. Large hip-roof barn. Perfect for the handyman. \$199,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SOUTH LYON - Are you looking for some peace and quiet in the country? Here it is. Perfectly maintained 3-bedroom, 2-bath ranch on a gorgeous acre-plus lot. The land and view are beautiful plus extensive landscaping, large deck, and fenced area for animals. Home features oversized garage, open floor plan, and finished walkout basement. \$184,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



CHELSEA - Charming early century 3-bedroom, 1-bath farmhouse on 2.5 peaceful acres on the east side of Chelsea. Quick access to I-94. Property is gorgeous and has the potential for horses. Home is loaded with old world charm with wood floors, oversized molding, large living room with fireplace, and family room with wood stove. \$179,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



SALINE - Perfect 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo walking distance to downtown Saline. This is a nice quiet condo complex with quick access to parks, shopping, and dining. The unit is in move-in condition and features open great room, kitchen with large island, first-floor bedroom can be a den, 2nd floor master retreat, and partially finished basement. \$139,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP - Very sharp 4-bedroom, 2-bath all brick ranch on a spacious double lot convenient to everything. Great yard features oversized fenced backyard, large deck, and 3-car garage. The interior is perfect with refinished hardwood floors, living room with fireplace, nice master bedroom, and partially finished basement. \$119,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



YPSILANTI - Rock solid 3-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath brick ranch in Gault Farms. Enjoy one of Ypsilanti's best neighborhoods from this well cared for home. Features include mature trees, covered patio, gleaming hardwood floors, oak kitchen, and finished basement. Roof, windows, and furnace are all newer. \$99,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



ANN ARBOR - Sharp 1-bedroom, 1-bath condo near U-M campus. Enjoy this quiet complex convenient to everything with in-ground swimming pool. This unit is in great shape and features a spacious living room, nice bedroom, and perfect condition throughout. \$64,900. Call Matt Dejanovich, 476-7100.



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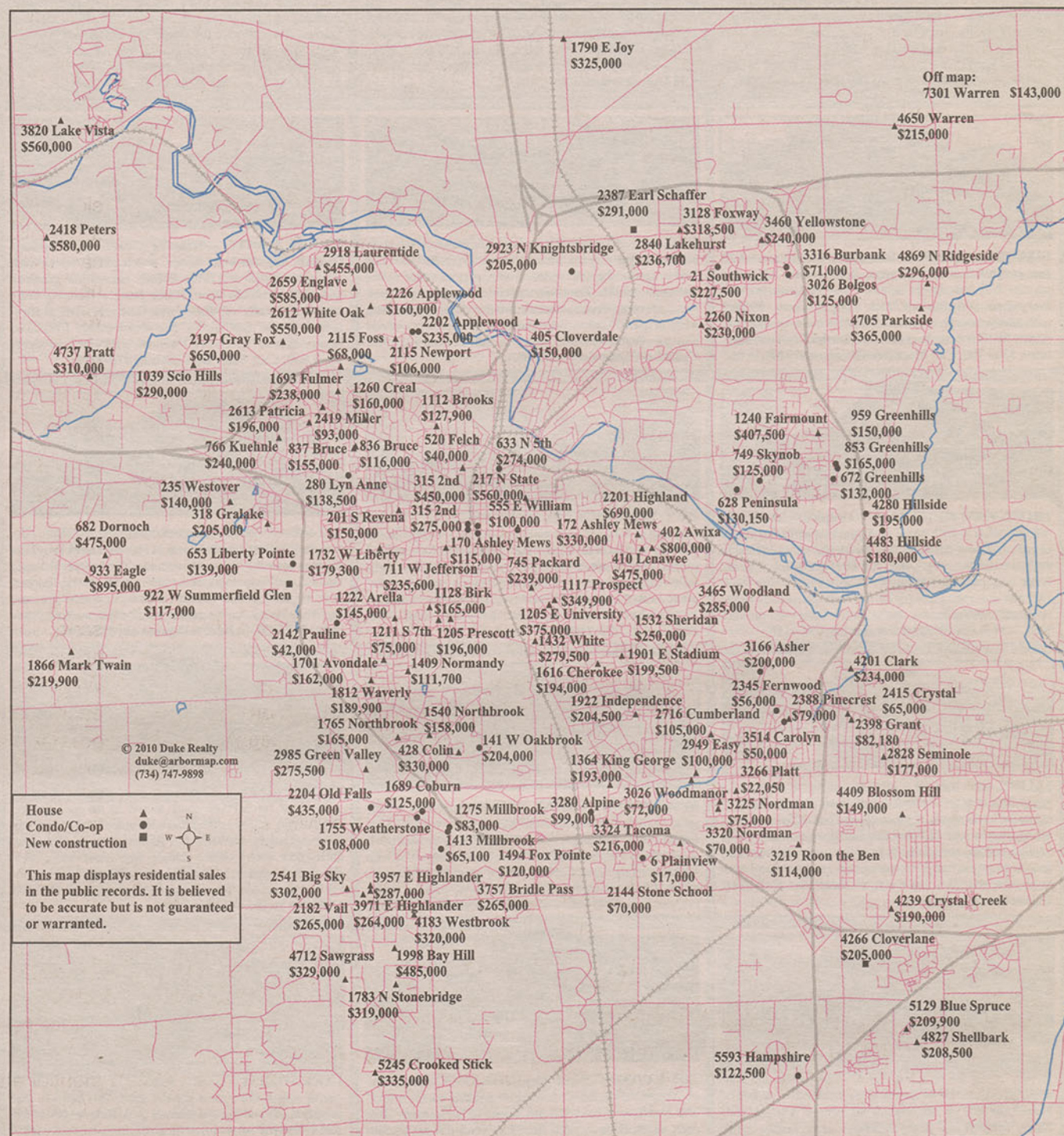
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OCTOBER 2010 HOME SALES



Homes are selling for 4 percent more this year in the city of Ann Arbor. Though modest, the improvement is exceptional compared to many communities around the country that are still searching for the market's "bottom." Based on our analysis of public records, the median price (half cost more, half less) for an existing single-family home is running at \$142 per square foot of living space so far this year. In 2009, the median selling price was \$136.

The sale of 3460 Yellowstone for \$240,000 exemplifies what buyers are getting for today's median price. On the map in northeast Ann Arbor, the three-bedroom brick- and aluminum-sided, 1,684-square-foot two-story includes two bathrooms and an attached two-car garage. Its tax assessment (SEV) was \$121,600, which means the assessor hit the bull's-eye on this one—the SEV should be half the market value.

At the top end, 402 Awixa sold for \$288 per square foot. Located high on a large lot off Geddes Road in the Highlands neighborhood, the extensively renovated two-story wood-sided home offers 2,781 square feet of living space. For their \$800,000, the buyers got four bedrooms, three bathrooms, and a detached three-car garage. The home's only low-end feature was its SEV—at \$301,400, it represented just 38 percent of the sales price (properties that have recently been extensively renovated often sell for more than double the SEV).

The most affordable property on the map by far is located south of I-94 and east of Stone School Road near Bryant Elementary School in the Arbor Oaks subdivision. With three bedrooms, the single-story ranch at 6 Plainview sold for \$17,000, or just \$20 per square foot. The 1,000-square-foot home included just one bathroom and no basement at all—only

a crawl space—but does provide an attached one-car garage.

This is the second sale this year for 6 Plainview—Fannie Mae sold it in June for a rock-bottom \$8,375, or \$10 per square foot. The agent for the seller, Arthur Trakhman of Can You Say Sold Realty of Plymouth, who specializes in hard-to-sell foreclosures and investment real estate, says that 6 Plainview was "basically a tear-down" and "non-livable." Trakhman's client didn't try to repair the home, instead reselling the property "as-is." The assessor has yet to catch up with this property's falling value—at \$49,600, its SEV was a sky-high 292 percent of the latest sale.

The other sign of a trend for the better is the rising number of sales. As of the end of October, the Ann Arbor school district has seen 1,308 sales this year—seventy-two more than during the first ten months of 2009.

—Kevin Duke



SNOW REMOVAL

City of Ann Arbor

STREETS

Where there is light snow or ice on road surfaces, the city's Public Services Area clears over 98 miles of high volume streets, bridges, intersections with stop signs or traffic signals, and streets with curves. De-icing materials are applied to provide better traction for vehicles to help prevent accidents at high-risk locations. The street clearing process takes about five hours and may be repeated as needed. After the major and high-risk streets are cleared, city crews sand the local streets in the City, which requires ten to twelve hours.

When a snowfall of four inches or more occurs, street snow plowing begins and the City Administrator may declare that a "snow emergency" is in effect. Plowing is done on all public streets and city-owned property; however, all schools and privately owned areas provide for their own de-icing and plowing. Citizens are advised to remove cars from curbside parking to allow for effective street plowing.

When a "snow emergency" is in effect, illegally parked vehicles may be ticketed and towed.

The city snow desk is staffed when a snow emergency is in effect. The snow desk tracks the location of plows throughout the city and provides information to the public about the plowing progress. You may reach the snow desk at 794-6367.

*** On days having odd-numbered dates, vehicles are**

prohibited from parking on the side of the street having even-numbered street addresses—in order to allow plows to clear the even-numbered side of the street. Parking is permitted on the side of the street with odd-numbered addresses in legal spaces.

*** On days having even-numbered dates, vehicles are prohibited from parking on the street having odd-numbered street addresses**—in order to allow plows to clear the odd-numbered side of the street. Parking is permitted on the side of the street with even-numbered addresses in legal spaces.

SIDEWALKS

When there is a snow event in Ann Arbor, the city depends on its citizens to be helpful, responsible, and aware of the need to remove all snow and ice from the public sidewalks including walks and ramps leading to a cross walk.

During the winter months, many Ann Arbor residents (including children walking to school and the physically challenged) need to be able to safely use the public sidewalks. This means that all snow and ice should be removed from the entire constructed width enabling people of all ages and physical conditions to have access to clean pedestrian walkways. City Council has passed an ordinance regarding snow removal (violations can result in fines up to \$500), but reminds you that

sidewalk snow removal is simply a combination of courtesy and caring toward all those who need to use the public sidewalks.

The city reminds owners or occupants of non-residentially zoned properties that all snow and ice which has accumulated on the adjacent public sidewalk prior to 6am must be removed by noon. Immediately after the accumulation of ice on such a sidewalk it must be treated with sand, salt or other substance to prevent it from being slippery. Within 24 hours after the end of each accumulation of snow greater than one inch, the owner or occupant of every residentially zoned property must remove the accumulation from the adjacent public sidewalk.

Remember, accumulation can occur from any source including precipitation and drifting, and the term "sidewalk" includes adjacent walks and ramps leading to crosswalks, typically at corners. Ice must be treated as mentioned above and removed within 24 hours after accumulation. Last but certainly not least, please exercise caution and care when shoveling, especially during extreme cold.

WASTE & RECYCLING

Place trash and recycling carts in a clear street or driveway by 7 a.m. on your weekly collection day, with 3' between each cart. Special pickup (disabled) customers must provide clear walkways to trash and recycling carts. Access to dumpsters must be clear of snow and ice.

Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Winter Season from the City of Ann Arbor

Please save for reference throughout the snow months.

Revised November 2010



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MarketplaceChanges

by Tony McReynolds & Sally Mitani

Passages on South U

Two campus landmarks make way for a high-rise

I haven't even started looking for another job yet," said a multiply pierced **Village Corner** cashier the week before the VC closed in early November. She was talking to a former employee who'd moved on to another retail job—and who told her, in a mournful tone that seemed far too world-weary wise for his twenty-something years, "You'll never work in a place like VC again."

In fact, the clerk may have a chance to work at the Village Corner itself again—owner Dick Scheer says the store is going into hibernation, not extinction. Scheer locked the doors of the campus landmark in early November after four decades of purveying fine wine and groceries at the intersection of South U and Forest. Next door, Bill Loy closed his **Campus Student Bike Shop** location on Forest after a thirty-eight-year run.

The businesses are making way for the oft-delayed construction of the 601 Forest building, part of a wave of high-rise student apartment complexes going up around campus. Both men emphasize that they are not going out of business, and each is trying to find a nearby location. Nonetheless, Loy in particular found the closing wrenching. "It was a tough thing to do," he says. "It's a pretty big deal. No more free air and tools for the students." He's moved all the bikes and equipment from Forest Street to his other store on Maynard, and says the do-it-yourselfers "will have to come over here now."

Loy says the developers offered him space in 601 Forest, but he doubts he'll take them up on it because he figures the rent will be too high. He's hoping to find someplace more affordable nearby. "We want to stay over there," he says. "We were over there for years. It was very sad."

Scheer is also saddened by the closing, but he's looking forward. "We have several locations we're considering," he says, and he expects the move to work out for the best. He hopes to find a spot with more parking, since many customers don't come in as often as they'd like because they can't find a parking space.

Scheer says they're shooting for a reopening in a new location sometime in 2012. He doesn't know if they'll carry the same mix of groceries, beer and wine, sundries, hardware, and other student staples—that will depend on how much space he has. But he'll definitely be continuing the VC's famously deep and varied wine selection. He held a 20 percent off sale in the days before the store closed, and customers seized the chance to stock up. "At the rate it's going," he said shortly before he closed, "we're not going to need much [storage] space."



Neighbors for nearly forty years, Dick Scheer of Village Corner and Bill Loy of the Campus Student Bike Shop are looking for new locations.

Hail to the Newest Wolverine

The Taproom opens for business

The Wolverine State Brewing Company Brewery and Taproom, housed in the back half of the original Big George's building, had promised an opening last summer. Like most new businesses, especially those involving food or drink, the process went more slowly than anticipated. By early November, with most of the football season gone, the owners were getting anxious as they awaited the final inspection. The location had been chosen in part because it's within walking distance of Michigan Stadium, and they had begun promising people it would be open for the November 6 Illinois game. Finally, at 2:59 p.m. on November 4, E.T. Crowe was able to send out a jubilant text message to 75 people, saying: "We are official!! Open tomorrow noon. Spread the word!!!"

Though Crowe is the company's sales and marketing director, she declines to suggest a shorter alternative to the mul-

tisyllabic legal name—"Westiders will come up with something," she predicts. Also known as the "Beer Wench," after a blog she writes, she's the highly vocal and ram-bunctious member of a quartet who have already been selling a bottled beer, Wolverine Premium Lager, for several years now. The other partners are Matt Roy, the finance director; and Trevor Thrall, who now lives elsewhere. The head brewer is Oliver Roberts ("Don't say brew-master," cautions Crowe, "it will get us in trouble with the purists"). Roy's father, Earl Roy, was the contractor responsible for turning the old scratch and dent room of Big George's into an inviting, clean-lined pub that seats 95, complete with dartboards, foosball, and tables inlaid with Michigan nautical maps. "We call him the Captain," says Crowe of the unflappable retired engineer, who still plays hockey and Canadian fiddle tunes.

Oliver Roberts, twenty-eight, like many other local brewers, passed through the unofficial Grizzly Peak University (Jolly Pumpkin's Ron Jeffries and the Blue Tractor's Tim Schmidt both got their starts there). Roberts grew up in Ann Arbor and says his father gave him his first brewing kit for his nineteenth birthday, not so much because he was interested in beer at that point ("never had a beer until I was twenty-one," he says with a choirboy smile), but because as a child he'd been fascinated by the art on the labels. He spent some time at WMU in Kalamazoo, and then was accepted into Oregon State University's renowned fermentation science program, but "after three months of taking chemistry classes, I decided I just wanted to brew beer." He eventually came back to Ann Arbor and fell in with the growing craft beer movement—according to Crowe, the city has more brewpubs per capita than any other place in Michigan.

Currently Roberts has seven varieties on offer, most of them the lagers Wolverine has decided to specialize in. Lagers, beer aficionados will know, are cold fermented and take longer to produce than ales, but like ales can be engineered to taste anywhere from hoppy and astringent to deep and mellow. The beer menu written on the chalkboard above the bar is a complicated table, listing short descriptions, alcohol percentages (which range

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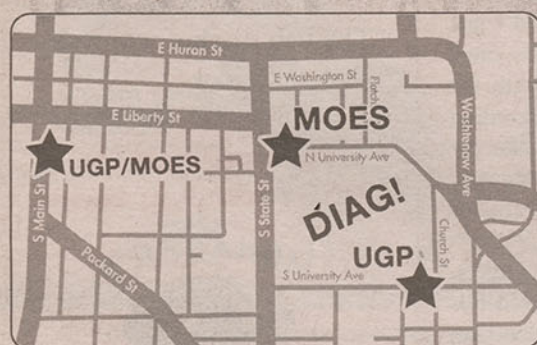
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Marketplace Changes



Head brewer Oliver Roberts and owners E.T. Crowe and Matt Roy show off the Wolverine Brewing Company's ten-barrel system.

from 3.7 to 6.9), and something called IBUs, or international bitterness units, from 15 to 67 ("Mention it!" urges Crowe. "Beer geeks will get it"). After Wolverine Premium Lager, the names get more fanciful: The Wench's West Side Wheat, Insolent Mink, Gulo Gulo Northwest, Pride of Biscuitville.

The Taproom is emphatically not a restaurant (and there's no wine or liquor either, though there's a small selection of soft drinks). You can buy what are somewhat unappetizingly known in the trade as "dry snacks," like popcorn and pretzels, and Crowe is heartily encouraging customers to order out. "I've got menus for Gourmet Garden, Happy Wok, Little Caesars, Hungry Howie's, and Cottage Inn. You call, you pay, someone comes to the door and says, 'Hey who ordered the triple pepperoni whatever.'"

Wolverine State Brewing Company
Brewery and Taproom, 2019 W. Stadium,
369-2990. Mon.-Thurs. 3-11 p.m., Fri.
& Sat. noon-midnight, Sun. noon-5 p.m.
wolverinebeer.com

Venezuela on Packard

*An architect finds her
calling in food*

Elizabeth Marcano-Kennedy painted the facade of the former Big Ten Burrito on Packard the rich, red shade of a robust South American wine. Marcano-Kennedy's a soccer fan, and since wine red is the official color of the Venezuelan national soccer team, it struck her as a good color for Ann Arbor's first Venezuelan eatery. **Marcano's Takeout** opened at 1906 Packard in early November.

Marcano-Kennedy, forty-seven, was an architect in her native Venezuela, but when she moved to the U.S. in 2003 to be near her sister, she found that she'd have to jump through so many hoops of study, training, and testing to get certified to practice here, it would be like starting over. She decided pretty quickly that that wasn't an option. "I loved being an architect, but I'd already done that—I had fights with clients and contractors, I know

how that works," Marcano-Kennedy says. "It was time for a change."

Like all smart career-changers, she looked to what she loved, and she found her new vocation in the kitchen. She took cooking classes at Washtenaw Community College to round out what she already knew from years of cooking for her family. Then, a year ago, her sister took a batch of her *povorosas*, cookies made with sugar, flour, shortening, and a crucial splash of salt, to Morgan & York, where they quickly sold out. Sales were equally encouraging at the Westside Farmers' Market last summer. Soon, Marcano-Kennedy had rented the kitchen at Jefferson Market and Cakery and begun expanding her offerings. Things worked out well enough to justify taking a flier on her own space this fall.

The heart of Marcano's takeout menu is its group of traditional Venezuelan dishes, like flat cornbread sandwiches called *arepas* filled with chicken, mayo, avocado, and Venezuelan cheese; fried yucca with homemade ketchup; *batidos*—South American-style fruit smoothies; fried green plantains; and *carne mechada*, a Venezuelan take on pulled beef spiked with salt, pepper, and raw cane sugar.

She'll be rounding out the menu with salads and soups from other South American countries like Argentina and Peru, such as Argentinean-style wheat flour empanadas and Peru's traditional *chupe*, a soup made with game hen (instead of chicken), white cheese, corn, and milk. Marcano's also sells Venezuelan cheese—a fresh, white cheese that Marcano-Kennedy says is more flavorful and saltier than other un-aged cheeses—and, of course, cookies.

Marcano's Takeout, 1906 Packard,
913-2071. Mon.-Sat. 7 a.m.-6 p.m.
Closed Sun.

Briefly Noted

Say the word nonpareil, and a lot of folk will think of those sugar-coated chocolate drops sold in candy shops. But the larger meaning of the word is unique, fine, and without equal. So it's an apt moniker for Michelle Moenssen's **Nonpareil Shirt Company**, a new Ashley Street boutique showcasing her colorful hand-dyed jack-

ets, scarves, and tops made from elegant materials like silk chiffon or merino wool. She calls her one-of-a-kind creations "wearable art."

Moenssen, forty-four, is well grounded in both the technical and creative sides of her business. She holds a B.A. in apparel design from Wayne State and honed her seamstressing and design chops apprenticing with some of the Detroit area's finest immigrant European tailors. From there it was an easy step to offering tailoring services for area retail stores, and then opening her own shop, Metropolitan Tailoring, in Birmingham.

After ten years she sold the tailor shop because, she says, "I wanted to get into the more creative aspect of the business." She traveled the country, displaying her wares in art fairs from New York to Maryland to Chicago, but soon learned that wasn't going to provide the income she needed. "It's a fun thing to do," she says, "but it's a difficult business model to make a living doing art fairs."

Moenssen plans to offer sewing classes at Nonpareil, as well as classes in fiber art, screen printing, silk painting, and soft cloth doll making. But the core of her business is making custom-fitted shirts for women and men, starting at around \$165. She takes all the measurements, and customers choose details like cuff and collar styles. Most of her shirts are all cotton, but she also uses other fabrics like a cotton/microfiber blend that's less disposed to wrinkling. She points out none of her shirts need to be dry-cleaned, yet people do it anyway, a practice that Moenssen finds funny—it's unnecessary, she says, since dry cleaners don't actually dry-clean shirts, they launder them just like people would at home.

So why do people shell out the money for dry cleaning? "Most people just don't want to iron their own shirt," she laughs.

Nonpareil Shirt Company, 318 South Ashley, 327-1837. Mon., Thurs., Fri. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Tues. & Wed. 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Closed Sun. nonpareilshirts.com

Danny Sherbin, who owns **Exercise Warehouse** in Livonia, is crystal clear on what kind of customers he's looking for in his new Exercise Warehouse on Jackson Road: rich ones. "The motivation was to go to an area that's an affluent area," says Sherbin, who's been selling treadmills, exercise bikes, and ellipticals since 1996 and wanted to expand. His typical customer, he says, is thirty-five to fifty-five, a fitness enthusiast, and "can spend over a thousand dollars without having to call the bank. We're looking for more of an upscale customer, because we're selling specialty fitness equipment. It's not \$300 treadmills like you can get at Dunham's or Sears. We offer service after the sale. My guys are very knowledgeable."

He thought Ann Arbor was a logical place to fish for those affluent customers—not only enthusiasts, but also patients from places like U-M cardiac rehab or MedSport. Sherbin also does a lot of "light commercial business," selling

equipment designed for workout rooms in fire stations, police stations, community rooms, and apartment complexes. That explains the very high end of the product line—there's a \$4,000 treadmill that takes up more parking space than a small car, but no one's going to try to sell it to you for your home.

Most of the heavy equipment at the stripped-down, minimalist store that opened October 1 in the stripped-down, minimalist Jackson Centre (home of Uptown Coney Island and U Pizza & Burgers) is the Life Fitness brand, unavailable locally since Fitness Experts closed a year ago (Marketplace Changes, October).

The reason Sherbin wanted to open a second store in the first place has to do with his manager Matt Miller (who was at a trade show the day we stopped in). "He wanted to grow within my company, but there's only so much you can do in one location." So Miller has essentially been given his own store. Says Sherbin: "He's knowledgeable, really patient with people, sensitive to their needs, and that's necessary because people have knee injuries, people have had heart attacks. We sell to people's needs, rather than just sell to sell."

Exercise Warehouse, 3933 Jackson Rd., 369-2044. Mon.-Fri. 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. noon-4 p.m. exercisewarehouse.net

By the time you read this, **Frames Unlimited** might already be back in its familiar Maple Village address, the freestanding building it shares with Village Kitchen. That space is now being remodeled to accommodate two new tenants.

Frames Unlimited has been temporarily doing business across the parking lot in the main building, adjacent to Plum Market. The new Frames Unlimited will be somewhat smaller. Two new businesses—one a hair salon and one unnamed—are being inserted into its west and southeast ends, making the new Frames Unlimited L-shaped. The downsizing is "perfectly fine with us," says Mark Stoe, area manager. "We had a lot of extra space in the back room. Sales floor-wise, it should be about the same, with a modern, updated look"—a new counter and an open ceiling. Asked whether customers might see any new stock as well, Stoe replied, somewhat huffily, "Our product won't need to change. We get new vendors and more exciting lines all the time," and pointed to the colorful Guerrini line of Italian-made, inlaid wood frames, as an example.

Frames Unlimited is an eighteen-store chain spread across southern Michigan and Ohio. There's another branch on Plymouth Road.

Frames Unlimited, 251 N. Maple Rd., 994-9105. Mon.-Fri. 9:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Sat. 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. noon-5 p.m. framesunlimited.com.

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The Zingerman's Times

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December 2010

Printed in Ann Arbor

Land of a thousand flavors

Lapsed Anarchist Shares Revolutionary Approach in New Book

Taking a cue from the 12 Natural Laws of Business, detailed in Ari's new book, *Zingerman's Approach to Building a Great Business*, area leaders are rejecting old business models and building a movement for a new kind of workplace in the 21st century. Says Chip Conley, founder of Joie de Vivre Hospitality and author of *Peak*, "This



book is the bible of karmic capitalism." In addition, Wayne Baker from the U-M Ross School of Business declares, "If you seek greatness, you have to read how Zingerman's does it." Purchase the book at any of Zingerman's Ann Arbor locations!

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Zingerman's Creamery 3723 Plaza Dr.
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Zingerman's Coffee Company 3723 Plaza Dr.
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Zingerman's Candy Manufactory 3711 Plaza Dr.
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www.Zingermans.com

exclusive! leaked memo reveals Zingerman's favorite holiday flavors

On a tip received from an inside source, the *Times* investigative bureau has accessed the 29 foods Zingerman's co-founding partner Ari Weinzwieg has on his "favorites for 2010" list. Folks feasting this holiday have been spotted stocking up and shipping them to food-loving family and friends coast to coast at www.zingermans.com or by calling 888.636.8162.

Christmas Cookie Club Collection

Ann Arbor author Ann Pearlman teams up with the master bakers at Zingerman's Bakehouse to create this exclusive collection of holiday cookies featuring recipes from her bestselling novel *The Christmas Cookie Club*. (*Times* investigators confirm Ann had her pick of many big name bakeries to develop this collection but chose to stay close to home and to taste she could trust.) Available at Zingerman's Bakehouse, Deli, Roadhouse & Mail Order.

Zzang! Bars from Zingerman's Candy Manufactory

Sources say a Great Candy Awakening is going on across town as chocolate fans discover, for the first time, what a candy bar tastes like when it's made by hand from the best ingredients and eaten fresh from the kitchen. New converts are thanking Candyman Charlie Frank and spreading the gospel of artisan candy to friends and family with the Zzang! Holiday 4-pack. Available at Zingerman's Deli, Bakehouse, Coffee Company, Roadhouse & Mail Order.

Owens Creek Olive Oil from California

A special oil made by Walter Hewlett, whose grandfather, A. Walter Hewlett, was a pioneering cardiologist at U-M (his father, Bill Hewlett, co-founded the Hewlett-Packard electronics company). Walter uses Sicilian varietal olives, hand-picked and pressed within 24 hours. Ari declares, "I love this oil!" Available at Zingerman's Deli, Roadhouse & Mail Order.



\$4 from every bottle of Owens Creek oil sold benefits U-M Cardiovascular Center

Read about all of Ari's 29 Favorite Foods of 2010 in the November/December *Zingerman's News* newsletter or at www.zingermanscommunity.com.

Local Dreams of Flavorful, Fuss-Free Feasting Come True

Reports from across the area indicate *Times* readers aren't dreaming of a white Christmas—they're fantasizing about enjoying full-flavored holiday fare with family and friends, without spending the entire season in the kitchen.

However, witnesses say these wishes are becoming reality with one phone call to Zingerman's Catering or Zingerman's Roadhouse. The 2010 holiday menus are now available, featuring a wide range of tasty, traditional options for entertaining friends, family gatherings, office parties, New Year's revelries and more.

Need help planning a menu? Don't know how much food to order? Have other questions or concerns? Call now – the celebration specialists at Zingerman's can help make feeding loved ones come off like a dream!

bring zingerman's home for the holidays!

★ Classic Catering Five Course Feast!

Get the special 2010 Holiday Menu at www.zingermanscatering.com or call 734.663.3400 for details.

★ Roadhouse Family Feast Out of the Box!

Check out the holiday take-out menu at www.zingermansroadhouse.com or call 734.663.3663.

Times Readers Invited to Zingerman's Catering Pre-Holiday Planning Party

Thursday December 9 • 4-7:30pm • FREE! • at Zingerman's Delicatessen

Get great gift-giving ideas for all different budgets and sample foods from the 2010 Catering Holiday Menu.

Party Planners Elevate Cheese Expertise at Creamery U.

Area holiday parties are featuring dazzling cheese trays, delectable fondues and homemade mozzarella all thanks to a major education effort from Zingerman's Creamery. Using knowledge developed in the Creamery's holiday cheese classes and tastings, local hosts are introducing happy guests to a new wave of really good cheese. These include Lincoln Logs, Manchesters and more made from local milk at the Creamery on Plaza Drive, as well as favorite imports from around the country and the world. In addition, *Times* readers are learning to make homemade mozzarella in hands-on classes at the Creamery.



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Restaurant Reviews

The Earle

Anchor for the ages

Old friends come to town, and for hours at the Farmers Market and Kerrytown we're talking food: new recipes, how our gardens fared, restaurants galore. I'm looking forward to dinner at the Earle, a treat for fellow foodies from small-town high-school days.

Our reservation's for half past seven, and I have fun taking the first-timers down the stairs to this oddly hidden high-end restaurant. Sparkly lights everywhere (including little ones in blue glass on the tables) set an elegant mood. We get water right away, and our glasses never run dry. The bread is freshly baked, the butter rich, the salads crisp. We nibble at but don't finish the barely breaded calamari, which pale in comparison to the crusty rings across the street at Grizzly Peak. The sommelier apologizes appropriately once he realizes he has forgotten us on this busy Saturday night.

Right when I'm getting nervous that my friends may not be having a good time, a trio of musicians take their stools, and soft jazz begins wafting over the crowd in the large stone-walled room. We settle in and enjoy fine filets of well-sauced beef and salmon—the latter cut in house from a whole fish, our friendly server Julie tells us. Her adept attention does the heavy lifting that pulls our special-occasion night back on track. An exquisite dessert tops off the fall feast: rich Tuscan apple cake swimming in confidently anise cream.

We head out sated with classic continental fare. And it's only later, saying goodbye and promising to send each other the spicy hummus and roasted beet recipes we'd discussed, that a disconnect between our afternoon and evening strikes me. Dinner was good, but it is the food talk in the afternoon that resonates most. And I suddenly recall comments from a chef friend about the Earle, from earlier this year. "I look at the menu and feel kind of bored—so many exciting things currently happening with food aren't happening there."

After seeing so many versions of familiar foods, professionals especially appreciate innovation. But is it fair to demand it from a clearly traditional venue, one well versed in excellence within its chosen provincial European parameters?

Personally, I'm always hoping that all aspects of a dining experience—menu,

service, atmosphere—meet their full potential and together lift the evening to a memorable realm. Restaurants can do that classically, or they can hop aboard the latest fad. With a wine list into the thousands and decades in the same space with the same style of cuisine, the Earle has chosen the traditional path. Its challenge is that familiarity breeds lofty expectations, magnifying flaws that might pass unnoticed where the novelty quotient is higher.

The Earle dates back to 1977, to a very different Washington Street. Before there were brewpubs, espresso depots, African, Asian, Eastern European, and Cuban-inspired restaurants on Ann Arbor's trendy restaurant row, big chow-houses like the Old German, Metzger's, and the Cracked Crab piled food onto plates. Even with its cave-like space, the Earle's elegance must have brightened the horizon like Julia Child floating in on Mary Poppins' umbrella.

The Earle still anchors Washington St., with its signature burgundy awning outside and gleaming brass and etched-glass lobby within. Brightly colored marketing posters (surprisingly dissonant with the signature logo and menu script) now line the path down the staircase, ensuring that you note the food's from scratch, the mussels and wines lauded.

Who cares about marketing when you're cutting into a fork-tender gem of beef, topped with peppercorns, Roquefort, mushrooms, or wine sauce? The Earle's panzanella has a fan club for its fearless way with garlic and anchovies that invig-

orate cucumbers and any old tomatoes. Decent wine can be had for under \$5 a glass, and no entrée hits \$30. I've never been disappointed by an Earle dessert, whether it's cognac ice cream drenched in dark chocolate, fruity sorbet, or textbook crème brûlée.

Not every item on the menu hits a home run, however. A tasty duck quarter came with overly sweet cider sauce. Pillowy ravioli stuffed with eggplant had great flavor and red-peppery sauce but left me chewing overlong on purple rind.

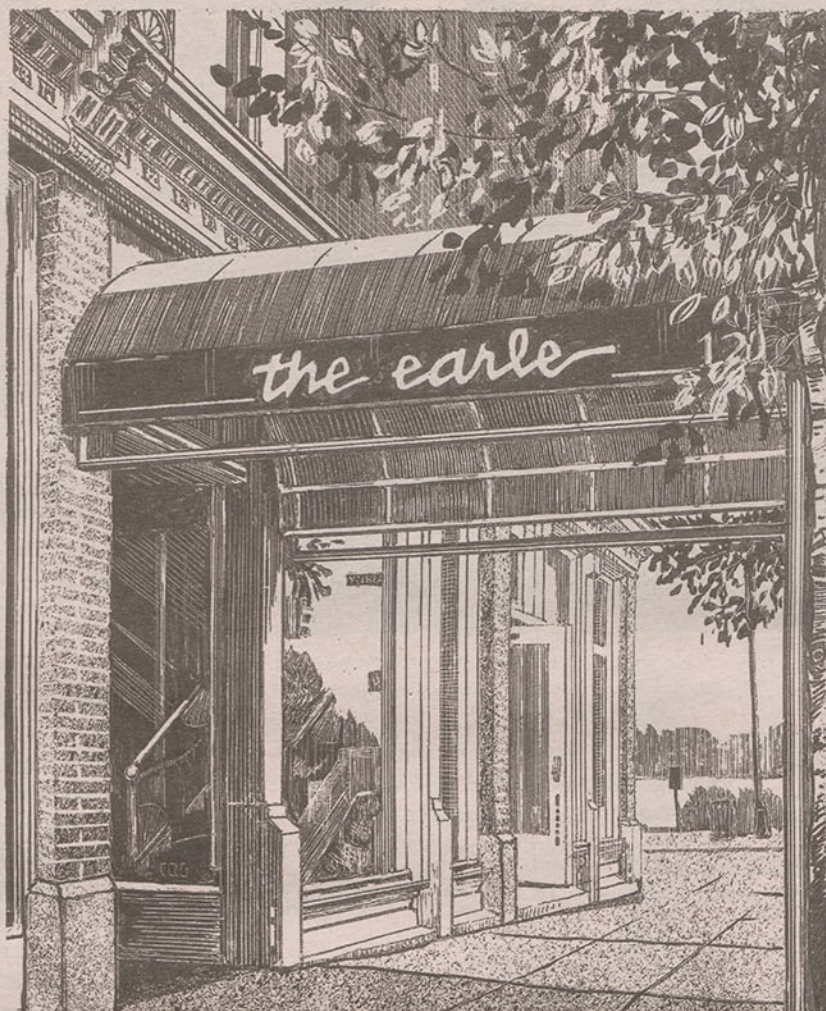
Service at the Earle also runs the spectrum. Julie was a real pro.

To the server another evening who kept touching my shoulder (once I wouldn't have noticed, twice would barely register, but three times *after* I started counting?): please save that attention for when I'm waiting for you to bring cream for my coffee and a pen for the bill slip.

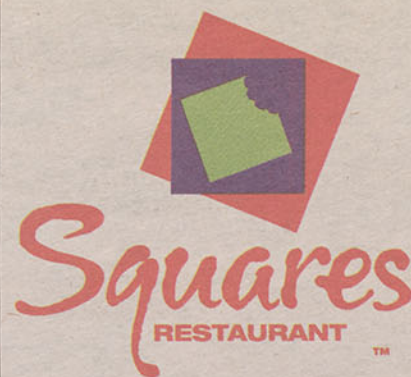
Holiday season nears, and the Earle continues to be a cozy place for intimate festive dinners. College kids bring their parents here, or vice versa. Anniversaries and engagements are celebrated with spirit(s), as are ends of workdays with specials in the cheery wine bar.

Bittersweetly, long life brings more chances for bad moments along with the good. Spot-on service across the board, continuing menu updates (the relatively recent appearance of minted artichokes and gingered fish seem good signs), plus everything it already does well should keep the Earle's magic alive.

—M.B. Lewis



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Restaurant Reviews

Beyond Apples

Grazing the Farmers Market

In the last couple of years, the offerings have increased enormously at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. While some farmers have always carried a few prepared items—jams, baked goods, cider—to augment their plant, vegetable, fruit, and flower selections, a new generation has brought meats and poultry, eggs, yogurt and cheeses, syrups, dressings, pastas, grains, pickles, and relishes. Market manager Molly Notarianni sees this increase as a reflection of the growing national interest in good, fresh, sustainable, local food, raw and prepared, and she has encouraged the new trend. Few of the new faces have a permanent market stall, nor do they all show up every week, particularly as the weather cools. But with their expanded smorgasbord of local foodstuffs, they have transformed the Ann Arbor Farmers Market into a market in the wider sense.

As usual with products that are hand-raised and handmade, few of these foods are inexpensive, but the quality is often good and occasionally exceptional. La Cake's \$2 mini coconut cupcakes, for instance, are fabulous bites, and the \$4.50 almond cream tarts from Cecilia's Pastries are truly French and truly wonderful. Thomas Organic Creamery's yogurt (\$5.75/quart), though thin, is sharply tangy, and Snow's Sugarbush maple cream, a spread made from maple syrup heated and whipped to a silky texture, is divine on oatmeal or toast; it's \$12 for 12 ounces. Even Tasty Bakery's gluten- and dairy-free chocolate chip cookies, while initially off-putting to this unrestricted eater, proved tasty, if a bit crumbly (they're two for \$3). And preserves, so often all sugar and pectin and little fruit, are here made more carefully; Kern Road Farm's crabapple jam is a thick sweet-tart spread that employs every edible bit of the fruit.

Snacks and treats are not the only options these new market entrepreneurs offer; the makings of great meals are also on sale. One evening, having earlier found cornmeal from two different vendors—Jennings Bros. Stone Ground Grains and Ernst Farm—I decided to do a taste test, making two batches using the same cornbread recipe. From a wide selection, I had chosen Jennings Bros. American Cornmeal, a blend of three types and colors of heritage corn grown and milled at their farm in Nashville, Michigan. Ernst Farm's single offering was a yellow stoneground cornmeal. When baked into a cornbread, both produced a tasty quick bread, but the American blend provided a nuttier, more fully developed corn flavor, truly wonderful paired with a vegetarian stew of roasted poblanos, tomatoes, and yellow-eye beans.

In addition to grains, Ernst Farm sells eggs, meat, and poultry. One evening I paired their pork chops with the Brinery's



Storm Cloud Zapper Sauerkraut, fermented cabbage brightened with beets and ginger (\$9/pint). Brinery owner David Klingenberg, an alumnus of Tantré Farm, has turned a fascination with fermented vegetables into a business producing pickles, sauerkraut, and kimchi. While good straight from the jar, the crunchy sauerkraut was exceptional braised with bacon, apple wedges and those pork chops as the foundation of a lovely autumnal meal.

Earlier in the season I bought a stewing goose from Harnois Farm, a poultry producer. It cost me \$18 but yielded three rich dinners and a quart of rendered fat for frying potatoes. Even better, though, was one of Harnois' chickens, slowly cooked on the rotisserie, paired with roasted tomatoes, and set atop Pasta e Pasta's sturdy egg noodles. The chicken was moist and full-flavored, not bland as mass-produced hens are.

The ubiquitous Zingerman name pops up at the Farmers Market in its Creamery incarnation. Oddly, the downtown deli itself doesn't sell all the cheeses that the Creamery produces, but you usually can find a half dozen choices at the market. This fall I was thrilled to find burrata, a perishable fresh cheese with a mozzarella skin and a creamy curd interior. I served it as part of a light dinner with sliced tomatoes, roasted peppers, fresh shell beans, Kenzoil's basil-infused garlicky olive oil, and a Mill Pond baguette. For a dinner party, I paired the Creamery's City Goat, a \$7 round of fresh tangy goat cheese, with grilled hot peppers, mashed sardines and pickled tomatoes to make an impromptu antipasto platter. Tecumseh's Four Corners Creamery also sells rounds of fresh goat cheese that are milder—and at \$5, less expensive—than Zingerman's.

For those wishing for more than sim-

ply the ingredients of a great meal, Pilar's Tamales is nearly always at the market, and sometimes on Wednesdays you can find other carts offering tempting possibilities. EAT, a catering company started by Helen Harding and Blake Reetz, commissioned a specially made cart from which they sell a variety of hot sandwiches, grilled vegetables, and handmade potato chips, all mostly made from locally sourced products. I tried an utterly delicious \$7 Korean-flavored BBQ beef sandwich topped with the Brinery's kimchi. The Flint Crepe Company's cart—owned by a group of Flint natives—boasts a large griddle upon which the vendor cooks and fills crepes, sweet or savory, to order. One morning I fortified myself with a \$6.50 Walling—eggs, bacon, and cheese rolled into a crepe, wrapped in a paper cone and (presumably) named for Flint mayor Dayne Walling—before I

started to shop. And there are often Café Japon's savory filled crossiants and hot coffee from Roos Roast Free Speech Coffee.

By no means is this a complete list of vendors offering good, local food at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. As noted, some may not appear again until spring, although manager Notarianni expects this winter's market days will see the most yet. If you're interested in trying what your neighbors produce, visit the market frequently and Google the vendors you might miss; many also sell their products via the mail or in retail shops. At the height of the season, the Ann Arbor Farmers Market can supply the makings of an entire meal, but it's a vibrant reflection of Michigan agriculture and entrepreneurship year-round.

—Lee Lawrence

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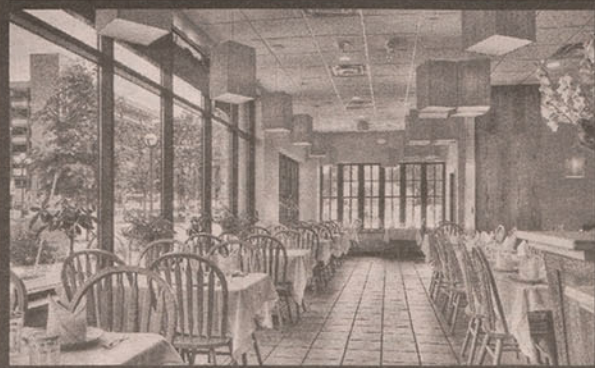
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Bus Stop

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of The Ride

A cold rain has started, dark rags of clouds spitting out hard, tiny drop-lets, the wind kicking up. My bus from the VA Hospital was five minutes late to the Green Road Park & Ride lot, missing my connecting bus home. I know in my sinking heart that I'm marooned. Again.

My body's in the throes of osteoarthritis combined with fibromyalgia. At times, my bones feel like they're screaming. But I can't afford a cab, so I set out for the two-mile walk home, casting curses at the AATA. I'm plodding into the homestretch by the time my bus rumbles by. Half an hour late or 45 minutes early? Who knows?

I watch the bus's red taillights tick away into the distance, vanishing at a misty crossroads fit for a werewolf. Daylight is playing out, and I'm still not home.

I remember when riding the bus was an adventure. My mom would give us each a dime for fare and send us off on the bus to the movies in downtown Royal Oak. This was an era when buses were fuming hulks, spacious yet intimate, gritty romantic stars of *film noir*—and oh, to sit perched on high and watch the world stream by below. Strangely enough, adult passengers sat immune, women drifting behind winged rhinestone glasses, men's fedoras angled over magazines. Grown-ups musing in their pods of silence.

When did the charm rub off? With time? The crazy spectacle of life? With exposure to a city's low places? Gruesome weather? Frustration? Or being stranded—a chronic stone in the rider's shoe? Miss your connection and you are stuck, at least here in the Green Road corridor. There's a reason why bus shelters smell of despair: people just want to go home.

Sad truth is, a neighborhood errand that takes ten minutes by car takes me an hour by bus. A haircut downtown, three to five hours! Yes, The Ride offers RideTrak, giving real-time information on where your bus is at any given moment, but it only works if you have cell phone or PDA web access. I don't.

Yet Ann Arbor has a bus system, when many cities have trash-canned their services. And at least in my corner of town, the roads are being smoothed out, slicked down—and that's definitely good. All the construction that has bubble dwellers (my name for car drivers) gnashing their teeth is even more frustrating for bus riders. With so many bus stops "bagged" due to roadwork, we are often forced to detour considerable distances, a quarter mile or more, on foot, through perilous (and unnerving) construction. Today's walk includes a wary trek along Green Road where road machinery bursting with



Miss your connection and you are stuck, at least here in the Green Road corridor. There's a reason why bus shelters smell of despair: people just want to go home.

fevered energy stuns the air around me. As the bubble dwellers zip, unaffected, through bristling traffic cones, I watch myself zoom by in car window after window.

In the long run, better roads will make The Ride smoother, easier on maintenance costs and puny human bones. And don't the new roundabouts at Geddes and Earhart look spiffy? Even better, the sidewalk along Earhart has been extended down to Geddes! In winter that stretch was impassable on foot; I've fallen into drifts, into slush, had to walk the shoulder elbow-to-fender with cars. In spring, the corner became Earhart Lake, and a body had no recourse but to wade through it. Every time this body stood wet and shivering at the bus stop, I asked myself, "How would a person in a wheelchair ever manage this?" That new sidewalk makes all the difference to people who are determined to be independent, but have trouble getting around.

Speaking of which, another good is that the bus is affordable, \$1.50 (basic fare)

or less, with discounts based on age and status—student or job, income, or disability (too bad I don't qualify).

Priceless are the soul-lifting days when a day care center brings children aboard, a rainbow of coats, boots, hats, little kid ornaments brightening a bus-colored universe. *People* are the real heart of mass transit: riders, creators, dreamers. It's one more reason I'd like to see more car drivers swap their insulated bubbles for the bigger bubble of the bus.

I might be raw, but I'm an optimist, and I can't help believing that if more people rode the bus, service would magically improve. The Ride offers most attractions of a car, with the added benefit of that pod of silence. Wrap yourself inside headphones, laptop, paperback, thermos, and enjoy your cocoon away from the world's dirt, noise, commercial stigmata of neon and party stores. And, a bus leaves more of a carbon kiss than footprint.

But most of all, the bubble dwellers are missing living poetry. A scene of Hitchcockian crows pecking at what used to be a burrito. Moments of Zen when monarch butterflies swarm out of nowhere, circling you on tilted wings, or you find yourself standing breathless in hoarfrost's diamond-dust fairyland. A summer afternoon, the bus rolling home at last over the pocks and hollows of unfixed roads, of your mind as you drift into airy daydreams while your detached body floats through the green light of trees. Go for it.

—Laurel A. Starkey

The Math of Dating

Romance by the numbers

Tell a friend, a sibling, or a neighbor that you are using an online dating site, and it seems as though every one of them has a story.

Some things about online dating are the same regardless of one's age, sex, or geographic location (but for the record I am fifty-four, female, and live in Ann Arbor). And though the Internet changes the way dates begin, the outcomes follow the same patterns they always have. After using a number of Internet dating sites—Yahoo, Match.com, eHarmony, Plenty of Fish, and Craigslist—off and on for five years, and having been out on more than a hundred dates, I have discovered there are basically five outcomes to dating:

1. You want to see the person again, but they don't want to see you....47.5%
2. The other person wants to see you again but you don't want to see them.....47.5%
3. Both parties agree...it ain't going to happen....3.5%
4. Both parties are interested in a second date.....1.45 %
5. Both parties are interested in dating and seeing what develops down the road..... .05%

That's right, the odds of meeting a "keeper" or even getting a second date are about as good as those of the Detroit Lions having a winning season, finding a free parking spot during Art Fair, or beating the "regulars" to the hidden antiques and collectibles at Treasure Mart.

So why would a well-educated and seemingly sane female roll the dice and decide it's worth the time and effort?

Because it can be fun. Mind you, I am talking about dating with an open mind, without expectations or a script, where I keep things in perspective and for heaven's sake don't take myself too seriously. That does not mean that I don't take the guy I am meeting or the date itself seriously, just that I realize most dates are one-time deals. So instead of lamenting what will never be, why not enjoy the conversation and take the opportunity to learn about another person?

With realistic expectations, I can honestly say that most of my dates have been positive experiences. I have learned the "real story" behind a number of professions and occupations. Also, following up on the recommendations I received from some of my dates, I have discovered some wonderful books, obscure movies, dive diners, fabulous thrift shops, and off-the-beaten-path vacation spots.

The odds of meeting a "keeper" or even getting a second date are about as good as those of the Detroit Lions having a winning season, finding a free parking spot during Art Fair, or beating the "regulars" to the hidden antiques and collectibles at Treasure Mart.

Of course, for certain dates the most positive experience was a good cup of coffee or glass of red wine, or simply that the date was finally at an end. (Once, at Quarter Bistro, I ordered a glass of champagne to celebrate the end of the date!) Furthermore, with time, I have come to realize that some of my worst dates became my best stories. My coworkers stop what they are doing and gather around to hear them.

My first bad date tested my theory that everyone has an hour or two of good conversation in them. I knew I was in trouble when my date told me that his three-year-old son was his best friend. After twenty minutes, it became obvious that his son was his *only* friend.

My shortest date ever was on a Saturday morning at Jefferson Market. The gentleman began complaining when he saw the long line for coffee. He must have really needed a cup of coffee, because his complaining escalated and did not stop even when he was at the table with coffee in hand. When I suggested that he might want to relax and quit complaining, he decided to drink his coffee at another table—a move I enthusiastically applauded.

Then there was Bob at Leopold Brothers, who talked about himself in the third person the entire evening. He told me that Bob had grown up in Ann Arbor, and that Bob enjoyed jazz. He said if I was curious to know anything else about "our guy" to just ask. I didn't have the heart to tell him that if "this gal" wanted to know anything else about him that "Cheryl" would consult the appropriate chapter in the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders).

Good date? Bad date? Turns out when all is said and done, it may just be a matter of perspective and having a good sense of humor.

If you're interested in knowing more, I am available for coffee or drinks most evenings after 6 p.m.

—Cheryl Blackwell

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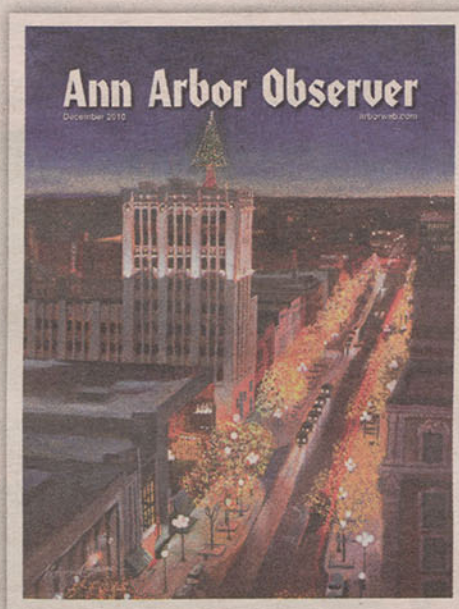
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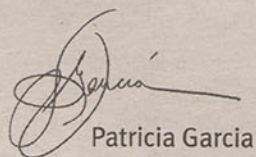
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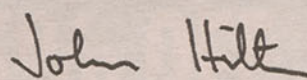
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Back Page

i spy

by Sally Bjork

"That's the sculpture in front of the U-M Art Museum!" exclaims Judy Steeh, adding that her husband urged her "to put 'sculpture' in quotes." Judy Sorensen apologizes to the artist for identifying November's feature as "that rather unattractive red/orange thing." While Judi Taylor points out that *Orion* by Mark di Suvero is on loan to the UMMA from the artist and Hill Gallery in Birmingham, Thomas Bletcher jests that it "was loaned to UMMA after the sculptor's wife told him to get that thing outta my yard!"

Di Suvero's massive sculptures have been said to "connect earth and sky, space and time." *Orion* was created in 2006 and was on display in Chicago's Millennium Park before being installed here in 2008. While opinions differ as to likability, no one can deny *Orion*'s striking effect. Standing below it "offers an unusual perspective," comments Louisa Griffes, "outlining [the sky] with brightly

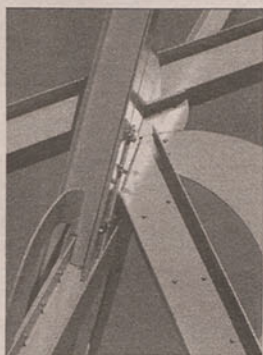


Built for blood (research, that is).

colored geometric shapes." And U-M astronomy prof Sally Oey points out how well di Suvero's design reflects its namesake: "The X arrangement of the principal beams (which manage to look like an X from almost any angle) evoke the four bright corner stars" of the constellation, while the belt and nebula are evident in the midsection. Oey used the sculpture to illustrate Orion in class and says her "students had no trouble identifying the many ways in which this piece evokes the constellation and mythical giant of Greek mythology."

Forty people correctly identified *Orion*. Oey won our random drawing and is taking her \$25 gift certificate to Ayse's Cafe.

To enter this month's contest, use the photo and clue above to identify the scene, then follow the instructions at the bottom of the page.



fake ad

by Jay Forstner

We received 146 entries correctly identifying last month's Fake Ad for a plumbers' discussion group on page 74 of the November issue. Evalyn Yanna's entry was chosen as our winner. She's taking her gift certificate to the Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase.

As always, the entries came from both far and wide, including one from Wayne Becker of Waupaca, Wisconsin, that allows us to clear up a common misunderstanding. "As I checked out all the ads in the November edition of the Ann Arbor Observer," Becker wrote, "the 'plumbers' ad' jumped out at me, mainly because it seemed like a very improbably 'unplumberish' ad—but also because it included no address, no web site ID and not even a complete phone number (i.e., including an area code). What

really puzzled me at first, though, was the absence of 'arborweb' anywhere in the article. Then I decided to check out what 'arborweb' looks like as a phone number and found it would be 'spelled' 27267932, which, with the exception of the initial '2,' is the phone number for 'Chris' given in the ad. So I identify this ad as the fake ad for November—though I'm puzzled by the absence of the initial 'A' (or '2') in the phone number, which reads 'rborweb' as it stands."

Thank you, Mr. Becker. Now, allow us to explain: The 'R' in 'rborweb' serves as both the 'A' and the 'R'. Say it out loud. You might find it useful to put a parrot on your shoulder and pretend you have a peg leg. "Aaaarrrrrr" is what we're going for.

To enter this month's contest, find the Fake Ad and follow the instructions in the box below.

To enter either contest, send email with the subject "Fake Ad" or "I Spy" to backpage@aaobserver.com. Mail: 201 Catherine, Ann Arbor 48104. Fax: 769-3375. You must include your name, address, and telephone number! All correct entries received by noon on December 10 will be eligible for this month's random drawings. Winners will receive \$25 gift certificates to any business advertising in this issue.



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MICHIGAN THEATER

HOLIDAY CLASSIC FILM SERIES

Presented by The State Street Area Association

December 5 4 PM
A CHRISTMAS STORY (1983)

December 12 4 PM
MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET (1947)

December 19 1:30 PM
IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (1946)

December 26 1:30 PM
A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN (1947)

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SUN. DEC. 12 1:30 PM

GreenCurrents, Blue Care Network of Michigan, Nicola's Books

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Events at a Glance

Daily Events listings begin on p. 46. Films: p. 50. Galleries: p. 52. Nightspots begin on p. 70.

Concert Music

classical, religious, cabaret

- Measure for Measure men's chorus, Dec. 3
- Detroit Symphony Orchestra members, Dec. 3
- Today's Brass Quintet, Dec. 4
- Pianist Arthur Greene, Dec. 4
- University Choral Union *Messiah*, Dec. 4 & 5
- Chaverim B'Shirim choir, Dec. 5
- Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra, Dec. 5
- Ann Arbor Youth Chorale, Dec. 5
- St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Choir, Dec. 5
- Community *Messiah* Sings, Dec. 6 (Saline) & Dec. 19 (Ann Arbor)
- Boychoir of Ann Arbor, Dec. 10 & 11
- Sacred Song, Dec. 11
- Vivo Sinfonietta, Dec. 11
- U-M Michigan Chamber Players, Dec. 11
- Ann Arbor Civic Chorus, Dec. 12
- Dexter Community Band, Dec. 12
- Northside Community Church Choir, Dec. 12
- Willis Patterson Our Own Thing Chorale, Dec. 14
- Washtenaw Community Concert Band, Dec. 16
- Women's Chamber Chorus, Dec. 17
- Treetown Community Chorus, Dec. 18
- Vocal Arts Ensemble, Dec. 18
- Dexter Community Orchestra, Dec. 19

Vernacular Music

pop, rock, jazz, & traditional

See *Nightspots*, p. 70, for shows at the Ark, Blind Pig, & other clubs

- Ben Miller (avant-noise), Dec. 2
- U-M student a cappella groups, Dec. 3-5, 9, 10, 17
- Don White (singer-songwriter), Dec. 3
- Carolina Chocolate Drops (old-time string band), Dec. 3
- Saline Fiddlers ReStrung (folk), Dec. 5
- Ron Brooks & Friends with Betty Joplin (jazz), Dec. 5
- Katie Geddes & Friends (folk), Dec. 10
- Voices in Harmony (Sweet Adelines) & Huron Valley Harmonizers (barbershop), Dec. 11
- Annie Capps (singer-songwriter), Dec. 11
- Ellen Rowe Trio (jazz), Dec. 19
- Jeff Daniels (moonlighting singer-songwriter), Dec. 21

Theater, Opera, & Dance

- *Best of Friends* (Purple Rose), Dec. 1-5, 8-12, & 14-18
- *Dorothy* (U-M Basement Arts), Dec. 2-4
- *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (Saline Area Players), Dec. 2-5
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Ann Arbor Civic Theatre), Dec. 2-5
- *It's a Wonderful Life* (Encore Musical Theatre), Dec. 2-5, 9-12, 16-19, & 21-23
- *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Performance Network), Dec. 2-5, 9-12, 16-19, 23, 24, & 26
- *Little Shop of Horrors* (Community High School), Dec. 3-5
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (EMU Dance Program), Dec. 3
- "RAW Weekend" (Blackbird Theatre), Dec. 3 & 4

- Fireside Festival of New Works (Performance Network), Dec. 5-8
- *Die Juedische Frau* (U-M Residential College), Dec. 8
- *The Eight: Reindeer Monologues* (U-M Basement Arts), Dec. 9-11
- *Much Ado about Nothing* (U-M Theatre Department), Dec. 9-12
- *Emails, Females, and Coattails* (U-M Dance Department), Dec. 9-11
- *The Sorcerer* (U-M Gilbert & Sullivan Society), Dec. 9-12
- *The Norman Conquests* (PTD Productions), Dec. 9-12 & 16-18
- *If Only in My Dreams* (Blackbird Theatre), Dec. 9-12 & 16-18
- U-M Musical Theatre "Revue" (Kerrytown Concert House), Dec. 11
- *Angels in America* (U-M Residential College), Dec. 11

Comedy, Storytelling, & Performance Art

- Comic Steve Hofstetter, Dec. 2-4
- Comic Nick Griffin, Dec. 9-11
- Comic Rob Little, Dec. 16-18
- Comic Chili Challis & Friends, Dec. 23
- Comic Josh Sneed, Dec. 31

Festivals, Fairs, & Shows

- Chelsea Hometown Holiday, Dec. 3-5
- Kerrytown "KindleFest" and Main Street "Midnight Madness," Dec. 3
- Concordia Boar's Head Festival, Dec. 3-5
- Waterloo Farm Museum "Christmas on the Farm," Dec. 4 & 5
- Ypsilanti Homes Tour, Dec. 4 & 5
- Cobblestone Farm Country Christmas, Dec. 5
- Kiwanis Christmas Sing, Dec. 5
- Ann Arbor TubaChristmas, Dec. 5

Lectures, Readings, & Forums

- Anti-death penalty activist Sister Helen Prejean, Dec. 2
- Novelist Jaimy Gordon, Dec. 6
- Poet Thomas Lynch, Dec. 7

Family & Kids' Stuff

- *The Nutcracker* (Youth Dance Theatre), Dec. 3-5
- *Pippi Longstocking* (EMU Theatre), Dec. 3-5 & 9-11
- *The Nutcracker* (Ypsilanti Area Dancers), Dec. 4 & 5
- *The Firebird* (Wild Swan Theater), Dec. 9, 10, & 12
- Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra "Sing Along with Santa," Dec. 11
- *Russian Vaudeville* (Children's Russian Club), Dec. 11
- *Fancy Nancy & Other Story Books* (Theatreworks USA), Dec. 12
- *The Nutcracker* (Dance Alliance), Dec. 12
- *The Snow Queen* (Young Actors Guild), Dec. 17-19
- *The Nutcracker* (Ann Arbor Ballet Theater), Dec. 17-19
- Storyteller LaRon Williams family show, Dec. 18

"Only in Ann Arbor"

Event of the Month

- U-M Mobile Phone Ensemble, Dec. 10

ZELL VISITING WRITERS SERIES

WINTER 2011



Fiction Reading
**CHARLES
BAXTER**

Thursday, January 6
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

New and Selected Stories from the author of *The Feast of Love*



Poetry Reading
**ALICE
FULTON**

Thursday, January 13
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

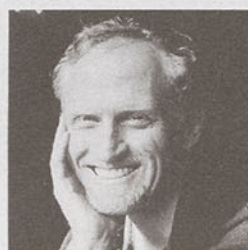
MacArthur Genius poet and short story writer



Canarium Books Reading
**JOHN BEER &
ISH KLEIN**

Thursday, January 20
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Exciting new work by Canarium Press poets



Poetry Reading
**CAMPBELL
MCGRATH**

Thursday, January 27
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Kingsley Tufts winner and MacArthur Genius of the long poem



Fiction Reading
**BONNIE JO
CAMPBELL**

Wednesday, February 9
7:00 p.m. | Keene Theater, East Quad

Author of National Book Award finalist *American Salvage*
Co-sponsored by the Residential College



Fiction Reading
**MARY
GAITSKILL**

Thursday, February 10
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Renowned author of National Book Award finalist *Veronica*



Janey Lack Poetry Reading
**CARL
PHILLIPS**

Thursday, February 17
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Author of National Book Award finalist *Speak Low*



Alumni Reading
**SUZANNE HANCOCK
& VALERIE LAKEN**

Thursday, February 24
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Homecoming for authors of *Cast From Bells*, and *Dream House*



Poetry Reading
**MATTHEA
HARVEY**

Thursday, March 10
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Kingsley Tufts winner and New York Times Notable poet



Zell Distinguished Writer in Residence:
Fiction Reading & Public Reception
**JONATHAN
LETHEM**

Monday, March 14
5:10 p.m. | The Apse, UMMA

Author of *Chronic City*, *You Don't Love Me Yet*, and *Motherless Brooklyn*

Lecture: **Thursday, March 17, 5:10 p.m.** | Helmut Stern Auditorium



Poetry Reading & Public Reception
**RAE
ARMAN'TROUT**

Monday, March 21
7:00 p.m. | Rackham Amphitheatre

2010 Pulitzer Prize winner
Co-sponsored by the Medical Arts Program & the UMH Endocrine Oncology Program



Fiction Reading
**RICHARD
FORD**

Thursday, April 7
5:10 p.m. | Helmut Stern Auditorium

Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Independence Day*

LINDA GREGERSON & NICHOLAS DELBANCO Faculty Reading March 24 | 2010-2011 ZELL FELLOWS Fiction & Poetry Reading April 14

The sponsors of the Zell Visiting Writers Series are the Department of English Language and Literature, the Office of the Provost of the University of Michigan, Janey Lack, and Helen Zell.

All of the events are free and open to the public. The Helmut Stern Auditorium is located at the University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 South State Street. For additional information, please call Megan Levad at 734.615.3710, or visit www.lsa.umich.edu/english/grad/mfa.

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